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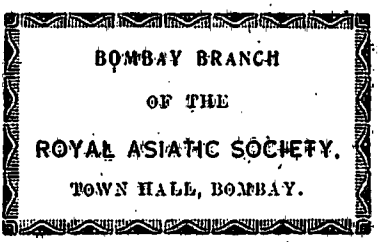

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THE

PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY;

IN A

COURSE OF LECTURES,

DELIVERED AT VIENNA,

BY FREDERICK VON SCHLEGEL.

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TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN,

WITH A MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR,

BY JAMES BURTON ROBERTSON, ESQ.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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CONTENTS

OF VOL. II.

LECTURE X.

On the Christian point of view in the Philosophy of History. —The origin of Christianity, considered in reference to the political world.—Decline of the Roman Empire.

LECTURE XI.

Of the ancient Germans, and of the invasion of the Northern tribes.—The march of Nature in the historical development of Nations.—Further diffusion and internal consolidation of Christianity.—Great corruption of the world.—Rise of Mahometanism. . . . 40

LECTURE XII.

Sketch of Mahomet and his religion.—Establishment of the Saracenic Empire.—New organization of the European West, and Restoration of the Christian Empire. . 78

LECTURE XIII.

On the formation and consolidation of the Christian Government in modern times.—On the principle which led to the establishment of the old German Empire. . 117

LECTURE XIV.

On the struggles of the Guelfs and Ghibellines.—Spirit of the Ghibelline age.—Origin of romantic poetry and art. —Character of the scholastic science and the old jurisprudence.—Anarchical state of Western Europe. . 152

LECTURE XV.

General observations on the Philosophy of History. On the corrupt state of society in the fifteenth century.—Origin of Protestantism, and character of the times of the Reformation. 194

LECTURE XVI.

Further development and extension of protestantism, in the period of the religious wars, and subsequently thereto.—On the different results of those wars in the principal European countries. 228

LECTURE XVII.

Parallel between the religious peace of Germany and that of the other countries of Europe.—The political system of the Balance of Power, and the principle of false Illuminism prevalent in the eighteenth century. . 268

LECTURE XVIII.

On the general spirit of the age, and on the universal Regeneration of Society. 300

PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY.

LECTURE X.

On the Christian point of view in the Philosophy of History.—The origin of Christianity, considered in reference to the political world.—Decline of the Roman Empire.

A REGULAR history of the life of our Saviour, recounted like any other historical occurrence, would in my opinion be out of place in a philosophy of history. The subject is either too vast for profane history, or in its first beginnings too obscure, whether we consider its internal importance, or in a mere historical point of view, its outward appearance. A thinking, and in his way well-thinking Roman, when he had obtained a more accurate knowledge of the life of our Saviour from the accounts of the Roman Procurator, or other Roman dignitaries in Palestine, might have expressed himself respecting the whole transaction in the following

terms: "This is a very extraordinary man, endued with wonderful and divine power, [for such vague and general admiration might well be indulged in by a Heathen, who yet adhered to the fundamental doctrines of his ancestral faith,]—a man, who, he would continue to say, has produced a great moral revolution in minds, and was, according to the most credible testimony, of the purest character and most rigid morals, who taught much that was sublime on the immortality of the soul and the secrets of futurity; but who was accused by his enemies, and delivered over to death by his own people." Such, perhaps, would have been the judgment of a Tacitus, had he drawn his information from better and less polluted sources. So long however as all these transactions were confined to the small province of Judea, the soundest and best constituted Roman mind could have scarcely felt a more than passing regret at the perpetration of so signal an act of private injustice; and would, in other respects, have not regarded it as an event which could, in a Roman point of view, be termed historical, or worthy to occupy a place in the more extended circle of his own world.

It was only when Christianity had become a power in the world—the principle of a new life, and of a new form of life totally differing from all preceding forms of existence, that it began to attract the attention of the Romans, as a remarkable historical occurrence. How perfectly unintelligible, strange and mysterious this mighty

event at its origin, and for a long time afterwards, appeared to the Romans; how erroneous and absurd were their opinions and conduct in regard to the Christian religion, we have already shewn by some characteristic examples.

On the other hand, when we view the whole transaction with the eye of faith—when we consider all that has since grown up in the world out of beginnings apparently so small—the case changes its aspect in our regard; and we are then inclined to believe that the mysteries and miracles of our Saviour's life and death, nay, the whole system of his doctrine, which is intimately connected with those mysteries and miracles, and is itself the greatest mystery and miracle, should be abandoned exclusively to religion, and, as they transcend the ordinary sphere of history, would be misplaced in a work of this nature. I will therefore pre-suppose a knowledge of these sacred mysteries, and, without entering into any examination of them, will endeavour to describe the state of the world, and the aspect of society, when the Christian religion first made its appearance. A notice of some particular points of doctrine, connected with politics and history, either in respect to the past or to the future, is by no means incompatible with my plan; but a complete examination of the whole system of Christian doctrines, as of any other great system of doctrine or philosophy, would, for the reason I have alleged, be quite misplaced in a work of this description. I will in the next

place endeavour to shew the historical influence which this divine power has exerted, and point out how from its very origin, and still more in its progress, it entirely renovated the face of the world.

Doubtless the philosophy of history forms an essential part of the science of divine and human things — things which in the mode of conc ing or treating them, should be rarely and e i never entirely separated. For how is it possible to attain to a just and correct k w-ledge of human things, in any department of life and science, unless they be viewed in relation to and connection with the divine principle, which animates or directs them? A certain medium, however, is to be observed, and the limits must be clearly and accurately traced between divine and human things, lest the one department should be confounded with the other. For as it is very prejudicial to religion to make it merely a matter of learned historical research; so it is inconsistent with the object of historical philosophy to transform it into a mere series of religious meditations. Undoubtedly historical philosophy can and ought to assume the divine principle in man—the divine image implanted in the human breast — as the great pivot of human destiny, the main and essential point in universal history, and the restoration of that Image as the proper purpose of mankind.

Thus the philosophic historian may endeavour, as I have attempted, to point out the divine

truth contained in the primitive revelation, the original word which was current among the nations of the primitive age: in the second period of the world—the decisive crisis between ancient and modern times—he will discover in the Christian religion, the sole principle of the subsequent progress of mankind; and the distinctive character and intellectual importance of the third or last epoch of the world, he will find only in that light, which, emerging from the primitive revelation, and the religion of love established by the Redeemer, has shone ever clearer and brighter with the progress of ages, and has changed and regenerated not only government and science, but the whole system of human life. Here is the principle which furnishes the plan of classification for all the great epochs of history. From this philosophic survey of history, the historian, in the accomplishment of his task, may with great propriety point out and illustrate the ways and views of divine Providence in the conduct of particular nations and ages, and in the destiny of remarkable personages, or historical characters, when those views and ways are strikingly perceptible to our feelings. Yet it is better that this train of observations should not be too systematically prosecuted, but should be introduced occasionally only, and as it were episodically, in those passages of history, where such reflections naturally present themselves; and they should ever be confined within the limits of a modest suggestion; for

all these reflections are only the esoteric spirit—the internal religious idea of history. Otherwise the historian will be exposed to the danger of introducing a system of Providential designs prematurely formed according to human insight and human sagacity, into the yet unfinished drama of the world's history, whose comprehensive vastness and hidden mysteries, besides, far exceed the narrow limits of all that man can conceive, judge and know with certainty. And this is a defect which many writers have not entirely avoided in their otherwise very religious meditations on universal history. So far, however, as the historian confines his train of reflections within the modest limits of a mere partial explanation, and does not prematurely anticipate the general scheme of divine polity, or plunge too deeply, and with presumptuous confidence into its details; he will find much and obvious matter for such considerations, in the visible selection of particular individuals, and particular nations and even ages for the accomplishment of certain ends, for the attainment on their part of prosperity, glory, or some high object in some particular sphere. But this power thus allotted to particular individuals or to particular nations, exerts even at the time a general influence on the fate of mankind, and evidently accomplishes the designs of Providence with regard to the world at large; forms a point of transition from past ages, or opens a passage to some manifestation of divine power, with respect

to the future. In the progress of human civilisation, such designs are frequently manifest. Nay, on the great question of the permission of evil, when it exerts a widely destructive influence in the moral and physical world, and on the views of God in that permission; the enlightened historian may sometimes succeed, if not in penetrating into the hidden decrees of divine wisdom, yet at least in uplifting a corner of the mysterious veil which covers them. In particular phenomena of history—such for example as the destruction of a whole nation, the Jews for instance; or in the overwhelming calamities, the general miseries inflicted on a corrupt age, manifesting, clearly as they do, the retributive justice of God—calamities which, when regarded from this point of view (and it is only from this point of view they can be rightly judged), appear like a partial judgment of the world—in all such historical phenomena, a modest reference to the final causes of such events may be exceedingly appropriate. This idea of divine justice, and of God's judgments on the world exemplified in history, belongs undoubtedly to the province of historical philosophy; and, as man's resemblance to his Maker constitutes the first foundation-stone of history, this more practical principle, relating as it does, to real life and all its mighty phenomena, forms the second.

But the Mystery of grace in the divine Redemption of mankind, transcends the sphere of

profane history. The Christian philosophy of history must indeed tacitly pre-suppose the truth of that mystery, and assume it as known, and indeed as self-evident to all well-thinking persons—it must even, under the inspiration of this faith, refer to it very many, the greater part, indeed almost all, of the facts and phenomena of history—but it should forbear to introduce it into its own province, and should leave it to the sanctuary of religion. In the same way, whenever philosophy attempts to incorporate and rank this mystery with her own speculative conceptions, the consequence must ever be hurtful to religion; for, as philosophy thus attempts to explain and, as it were, deduce this mystery from her own speculations, the mystery of Redemption ceases to be a divine fact, and it is only as such that it is and can be the true and eternal foundation of religion. I wish here expressly to do away with an opinion which is completely unhistorical, and even subversive of all history. I cannot more truly and succintly designate this opinion, than by stating it as follows:—Christ, to say it in one word, was a Jewish Socrates; and this purest, noblest, and sublimest of all ethical teachers (according to the rationalists' interpretation of his history) met with a fate no less deplorable for mankind than that which befel the Athenian philosopher, and the wisest of all the Grecian sages. In reply to this, one observation only need be made —*If Christ were not more than a Socrates, then a*

*Socrates He was not.** But this opinion is not only unhistorical, or, to speak more properly, *anti-historical*, because it is in utter opposition to all covenants, testimonies, authentic records, and even Christ's express declarations; but fully as much, and even still more on this account, that if we once remove this divine key-stone in the arch of universal history, the whole fabric of the world's history falls to ruin—for its only foundation is this new manifestation of God's power in the crisis of time—this hope in God abiding unto the end. For, although I do not consider a formal demonstration of the truth of the Christian religion as falling within the province of profane history; yet the belief of its truth—a faith in its dogmas, is the only clue in such investigations. Without this faith, the whole history of the world would be nought else than an insoluble enigma—an inextricable labyrinth—a huge pile of the blocks and frag-

* In confirmation of this pithy sentence of Schlegel's, I may cite a remarkable passage from the celebrated Lessing, which, as coming from an Infidel, may perhaps have more weight with the Unitarian. "If Christ," he says, "is not truly God, then Mohammedanism was an undoubted improvement on the Christian religion: Mahomet, on such a supposition, would indisputably have been a greater man than Christ, as he would have been far more veracious, more circumspect, and more zealous for the honour of God, since Christ, by his expressions, would have given dangerous occasion for idolatry; while, on the other hand, not a single expression of the kind can be laid to the charge of Mahomet."—*Lessing's Beiträge zur Geschichte und Litteratur.* Vol. II. p. 410. —*Trans.*

ments of an unfinished edifice—and the great tragedy of humanity would remain devoid of all proper result.

Confining myself within those limits which the very nature of the subject, and the force of circumstances prescribe, and which I have here thought it necessary to mark out with exactness, I shall now, in order to see under what circumstances Christianity first arose in the world, and appeared on the domain of history, direct your attention more immediately to the Jewish state.

Dependant at first on the Grecian dynasty of Egypt, and at a subsequent period subdued by the Soverigns of the new Syrian monarchy, which sprang out of the dismemberment of the Macedonian empire, the more virtuous portion of the Hebrew people evinced under the religious persecution they had to sustain from the latter monarchs, much constancy in the old faith of their fathers; for which indeed several of the heroic family of the Maccabees had the courage to lay down their lives. From these rulers they were rescued by the Romans, who took them under their powerful protection, which, with the Jews, as with all other nations, was soon transformed into a systematic and very oppressive domination. The Jewish people were so far involved in the civil war between Cæsar and Pompey, that each party favoured that aspirant to the throne of Judea, most favourable to its own designs. Under the mo-

narchy of Augustus, Herod, who was created tributary sovereign of Palestine about forty years before the Christian æra, was the last who had been promoted to sovereignty amid this conflict of parties. The temple of Jerusalem, that had been rebuilt with the permission of Cyrus, still remained in all its pomp and grandeur. If a profane curiosity had tempted Crassus and Pompey to intrude within its sanctuary, on the other hand, the munificence of Herod had added to its size and increased its decorations. Although Herod ever retained a partiality for Roman customs, and still more for Grecian opinions, yet the temple of Jerusalem considered, not as the august sanctuary of Heaven's revelations to the chosen people, but as the centre of attraction for the Jewish nation, situated as it was in the midst of a great commercial city, (one of the largest in all Western Asia), and forming at once the treasury, and by its close proximity to the citadel, the rampart, of the city and of the state, must have been regarded by Herod as the seat of his power, and the nearest object of his ambition. There were at that period among the Jews two parties, which, like those of the Patricians and Plebeians in the civil wars of Rome, bear some resemblance to the parties that at present divide the world: although in their relative position towards each other, as well as in their internal character and tendency, there are many important points which distinguish them from the parties at pre-

sent existing. Though from the predominant spirit and peculiar constitution of the Jewish people, the subjects of contention between the two parties related chiefly or more immediately to matters of religion; yet politics were not entirely excluded from their disputes, which embraced in general the whole of human life and its various relations. The Pharisees were the chief scribes and doctors of the law, and in the state, the honoured Patricians of the Hebrews, who sought to maintain the ancient faith and ancient constitution of their country with its rights and jurisprudence, adhering indeed with a rigid scupulosity, and a contentious subtilty to the letter of the old law, while they had long forgotten its divine spirit, and were notorious for their attachment to their own interests, their selfish feelings, and false and contracted views. As they acknowledged, and respected with the most scrupulous fidelity all existing laws, they sided, apparently at least, with the Romans; though they never entertained a cordial attachment for those conquerors; and indeed they ever cherished the hope of being being able to ensnare the great Teacher, so beloved by the Jewish people, into a declaration against the Roman rule, as in their limited views they conceived He must, sooner or later, be necessarily driven to that expedient in order to sustain his popularity. But it cannot be doubted that the cause which the Pharisees defended was, on the whole, the legitimate cause of the Hebrews of

that period, since our Saviour himself expressly acknowledged this, when he said of the Pharisees,—"They sit in the chair of Moses, and whatsoever they command you, that do ye." It was precisely because they had made the old law, and the cause of God, their own cause, that so much was exacted of them; and that they were judged with so much severity by our Saviour, apparently with greater severity than were the Sadducees themselves, who by an Epicurean philosophy, and a latitudinarian system of morals, had fallen almost entirely from the faith, had affixed a mere human interpretation to Scripture, and had even called in question the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. If in this sect there were individuals entertaining purer and more exalted notions of the truth, we must regard them rather as happy and honorable exceptions. We must not, besides, forget that the severe judgments on the Pharisees, which occur in Scripture, refer only to the more degenerate among them,—a great portion, doubtless, perhaps the greater part; but by no means include the whole sect or body, among whom were many worthy individuals.

We ought also to recollect that the apostle Paul was a Pharisee, and though a well-intentioned, yet a very zealous, one, for all his writings shew the man who had sat at the feet of Gamaliel: the latter again was the grandson of the illustrious Hillel, who is named as one of the last great doctors of the Hebrews, who was pro-

foundly versed in their sacred traditions, and was indeed one of the last pillars of the Synagogue. The Jewish history or tradition mentions seven species of false Pharisees, to whom all the reproaches of our Saviour are perfectly applicable. Many other Pharisees, besides the apostle Paul, are mentioned with honour in Holy Writ, as friends and disciples of our Redeemer, though they had not the courage openly to declare themselves his followers.

Whenever, in the history of mankind, we arrive at some epoch of great crisis, or momentous collision, we find invariably, and in all countries, two contending parties like these, appearing at once on the historical arena, though in forms or positions variously modified. The party defending antiquity, often adheres only to the dead letter of rigid law, forgetting its inward sense and living spirit; while the opposite party, which has a strong conviction that the world stands in need of a new legislation, and that the epoch of a new legislation approaches, is not entirely in the wrong. But when the members of the latter party have lost all faith in the sacred traditions of the past, and have consequently forgotten that the great work of regeneration can emanate from God only; they conceive that it is in their power to accomplish this work, nay, they fancy they have already succeeded in their enterprise, while all their futile attempts can accomplish nought but a total revolution in the past—a revolution

brought about either by external violence, or, in its best and mildest form, by the internal ruin of moral principle and feeling. Between these extreme and conflicting parties, individuals are often found who fly from the field of contention, and seek out a higher asylum, at least for themselves. Such were those small communities of holy contemplatives that then existed among the Jews, the Essenians in Palestine, and the Therapeutæ in Egypt; but these ascetics, limited in number, formed a trifling exception by the side of the two great predominant sects. It was between these two leading parties—on one hand, the narrow-minded and selfish Jewish legitimatists—stiff adherents to the letter of the law,—and, on the other hand, the liberal illuminés;—between the old promises and expectations of the Hebrews, and the Roman dominion, now become and acknowledged to be legitimate, that our Saviour had to steer; and it required a more than human prudence to traverse this critical period, unaffected by the spirit of contending factions. "Give unto Cæsar what belongs to Cæsar," was his simple declaration, when men sought to entrap him by their worldly cunning: and this declaration has remained a fundamental precept of Christianity, and will continue unchanged to the end of time. So will that other oracle, "Thou art a rock, and upon this rock I will build my church;" in this there is a clear and distinct precept how Christians were to treat those Pagan pretensions of the Romans which

regarded acts of political idolatry, such as the sacrifice before the image of the Emperor, and acts of a similar kind; and how, as witnesses of the truth, against all the powers of earth, they were to seal their testimony with their blood. The capital error of the Jews lay in this, that in the Deliverer, promised to them of old, they now generally expected an earthly liberator destined to emancipate them from the oppressive yoke of the Romans, and to restore their national empire to its highest glory and splendour. And, indeed, had they not carried their notions on this point to such extreme lengths, and with such unyielding obstinacy, much might have been alleged in their excuse. According to the usual character of prophetic speech, the portrait of a spiritual Deliverer, invested with real glory and pomp, had been drawn in such vivid colours in those ancient prophecies, that the description might, in many passages at least, be easily mistaken for one of an earthly monarch. Or, to express my meaning with greater accuracy and precision, as it is the peculiar character of sacred prophecy to represent events about to follow, in immediate contact with the ultimate objects to which they tend, there are often in those prophetic descriptions of the future prosperity of the chosen people, many passages on the remote period of the last ages of the world, and on the universal triumph of Christianity throughout the earth at the end of time; there are often, we say, many of those passages

which also refer and indeed contain the closest allusions to the commencement of the Christian redemption. In the same way, although in a different sort of subject, we see our Saviour himself foretell the impending ruin of Jerusalem and of the Jewish nation, while his lamentations are closely linked, and almost confounded with, prophetic warnings respecting the awful and terrific scenes of latter times, and the approaching day of general account; although both these events, the ruin of the temporal Jerusalem, and the last glorious transformation of nature, when creation shall be consummated, and a new heaven and a new earth shall spring into existence, are to be strictly regarded as real and historical. So close an attention, and so great a power of discrimination are requisite to distinguish between parts, to combine the whole, and place each particular fact in its proper point of view. But the best excuse that can be offered for the Jews, in this respect, is the fact, as the scripture clearly sheweth, that all the followers of our Saviour, and his most trusty disciples, were at first under the same delusion, and for a long time believed that, though the right moment had not yet arrived, still their master would certainly appear as the earthly Deliverer and Monarch of his nation; and indeed the idea of his sufferings and death was so abhorrent to their feelings, that they even dared to express their disapprobation, and upbraid their Saviour for entertaining such thoughts; for it was only at a much

later period the bandage fell from their eyes. And the great reproach which we are to make the Jews is that they should have adhered with such obstinacy to an error, very excusable under certain circumstances, and that after all they had heard, seen and experienced, they should have still closed their eyes against the light. The conduct of our Saviour towards the Jews is often represented in a manner little conformable to historic truth, and to the spirit and character of this mighty revolution, when it is said that he entirely abrogated the whole system of the Mosaic law The outward scaffolding was indeed removed, when it had ceased to be necessary; such were all those laws which applied only to that state of strict separation from Heathen nations, which at an earlier period had been of such absolute importance. Very many things were still retained; and all now received in the fulfilment a higher spiritual signification; and this was natural, when we consider that in Judaism itself every thing which had not been designed merely for local and temporary wants, from the very commencement of that dispensation, was typical of Christianity. The twelve apostles, as well as the first seventy-two disciples, were taken exclusively from the chosen people, and even, in this respect, the divine promises were completely fulfilled, and literally observed. The constitution of the ancient hierarchy has very evidently furnished the pattern for that of the Christian priesthood; though this of course

has been adapted to the wider circle of a higher and more spiritual system. The expression, "My kingdom is not *of* this world," does not imply that it was not to be *in* this world a real and effective power, with a form and organization clearly defined. Many have read so much, or inferred so much, from this declaration, that they could not adopt an easier or more polite method of shutting out this divine empire of truth from the world. In the hours of the greatest solemnity, the divine Master revealed to his disciples the hidden sense of the ancient revelation in all the plenitude of its mysteries. As the Saviour himself said that every word and syllable of the old law must be literally fulfilled; as in general the spiritual interpretation of the divine oracles is by no means inconsistent with their literal truth and inviolable sanctity; so the same remark will apply to the new revelation, in which every word and every syllable of prophecy will receive a full and practical accomplishment before the consummation of time. Even in another point of view, particularly worthy the consideration of the historian, Christianity must be regarded only as a divine continuation, a higher and more expansive form, or spiritual renovation, of the Mosaic institution; and was so intended by its divine Founder; namely in those aspirations after futurity, which now so exclusively directed the whole of human life, and its various views.

That law of divine wisdom, by which earthly

existence is to be looked upon only as a state of expectation, of preparation, and of struggle—a view of life alone accordant with human nature —that law has retained its full force in the new covenant. For the primitive Christians, death was what the Saviour said of himself, a return, a passing unto the Father, but life was one ceaseless struggle. For him who unto the end fought steadfast in this struggle, the angel of death was divested of his terrors; he was a celestial messenger of peace, that brought to the Christian the bright garland of victory, and the crown of eternal life; in this faith and in these sentiments, did the Saints live, and the martyrs die. And as every human soul is conducted to the realms above by the gentle hand of its divine guardian; so the Saviour himself has announced to all mankind, in many prophetic passages, that when the period of the dissolution of the world shall approach, he himself will return to the earth, will renovate the face of all things, and bring them to a close. So lively an assurance had the first Christians of the immediate presence of their invisible lord and guide, so vivid a hope did they entertain of his speedy return to the earth; that, in order to check the aspirations of a zeal that would accelerate the period of consummation so ardently desired, divine Providence judged it necessary that the Prophet of the New Testament should close the volume of eternal revelation with that long succession of ages that were to witness the progres-

sive struggle of humanity—all those centuries of Christianity that mankind was yet to traverse, before the promise should be fulfilled, and in the fulness of time the final and universal triumph of Christianity throughout the earth should be accomplished, for all mankind must be gathered into one fold, and under one Shepherd. According to the spirit and precept of the Christian religion, man must at every moment be prepared; but he must not, in a presumptuous ardour, accelerate the term of existence fixed by the wisdom of Almighty God. Thus all those Christians who, during the times of the most violent persecution of the church under the Romans, courted the danger, and would not await the honour of martyrdom, were warned that such conduct was by no means conformable to the will of God; as it often happened that those who, by such an overweening confidence in their own strength, had wantonly rushed to the field of danger, succumbed under their torments, and fell from the faith.

Had the Jews but opened their eyes in the right time; had they acknowledged the divine fulfilment of ancient promises in the mission of Christ, which was in fact far more exalted and more splendid than any thing they had expected; and had all, or even the greater part, of the nation embraced Christianity; they would have become the mighty stem—the great foundation — the central point of all modern history, and all modern life. But as they did

not correspond to this call of divine Providence, a call fully justified by their circumstances, their early history, and the prerogatives which the Almighty had once accorded to them above all other nations; the justice of God required that they should now receive a signal chastisement, that they should be deprived of their national existence, dispersed among all the nations of the earth; and that, in this state of ruin and dispersion, they should serve as a memorable example to the world. But this humiliation of the Jews, which was calculated to draw down the contempt of the Heathen, who looked only to outward things, should have never given rise to oppression or ill-treatment among Christian nations; and the more so, as it is still a problem whether any other people placed in a similar situation, and warped by selfish prejudices, and old and deep rooted errors, would have done better; or whether mankind in general, subjected to a similar trial, would have come off more successfully.

The old temple of the holy city was not, like the idolatrous temples of the Heathens, a mere magnificent monument of national glory, adorned with all the splendour of art; but the idea and plan of the whole structure, its minutest parts, every stone, and every cipher, were clearly indicative and profoundly symbolical of that invisible temple, that mighty city, that divine kingdom of peace, which Christ was to establish on earth, and which he had now at

length come to establish. Even the name of Jerusalem, according to the Hebrew signification of the word, has the emblematic sense of revelation and foundation, or city of peace, by which is understood not a mere earthly and transitory peace, but that higher and divine peace which forms the subject of all the promises made unto the chosen people. This prophetic sense and typical design of the holy city is so closely connected with the origin and whole idea of the city, that in some passages of the Old Testament such figurative expressions are used, as if the whole business, nay the whole life, of man had no other object "than to build up the walls of Jerusalem;" in the same sense as if a Christian moralist were to say; the proper end and ultimate object of mankind, and of the history of all nations and ages, is the kingdom of God, that is to say, the ever wider diffusion and firmer consolidation of Christian truth and Christian perfection throughout the world. When the spiritual and internal sense of this mighty and historical hieroglyph of the Jewish people was no longer understood; when the mighty truths which it embodied, at the very moment they were about to receive their full explanation and perfect development, were misunderstood and rejected; what was more natural than that the emblem, which had lost its meaning, should be effaced, the temple destroyed, and the city itself levelled and razed by the arm of divine justice? This is the view which the Christian

historian must take of that mighty and fearful catastrophe which now befell Jerusalem, and the whole Jewish people under Vespasian; and indeed the impression which this event made on the Jews, though somewhat diversified by national sentiments, is in all essential points conformable to our own feelings. That in every such widely destructive disaster, which by divine permission may afflict any portion of the human race, the loving wisdom of God will know how to take each individual soul under its special protection, and will guard and spare it, at least, in its immortal part, is a truth so evident to every religious mind, that it is unnecessary to enforce it at any length. If, as the Scripture saith, "the hairs on a man's head are numbered," so will each day, nay each hour, each pulsation of human existence be counted; yea, every heartfelt tear the eye of sorrow shall shed, will be reckoned by the guardian spirit of eternal love. But this religious regard for the fate of individuals, and this humane sympathy with their misfortunes, must be kept within its proper sphere in historical disquisitions, where the principal design is to study and observe, as far as the limited perception of man will permit, the mighty course of divine justice, through all ages of the world.

When the Jews were disappointed in the hope they had entertained of a liberator, who was to be sent from above, armed with divine power to deliver them from the stern yoke of

Roman domination; exasperated by the ever increasing tyranny of their masters, after several partial insurrections, the whole nation, three and thirty years after the death of our Lord, broke out into open rebellion; and the whole country, torn by infuriated factions, which fanatic hate inspired with the courage of despair, exhibited all the horrors of the most terrific revolution. The savage warfare of the Romans in such a deadly struggle, we have already learned from the example of Carthage; for however mild and benevolent might be the personal character of Titus, it was out of his power to introduce any change in the system of war; and the number of men that perished in the siege and ravage of the holy city is estimated at 1,300,000; including the small number that were led away captives, or reserved to grace the triumph of the conqueror. The Emperor Hadrian rebuilt the city, which had been totally destroyed, under the new and Pagan name of Ælia Capitolina, and even erected within it a temple to Jupiter: but no Jew was permitted to enter within its walls. At a later period the Emperor Julian had intended to re-establish the Jews in their ancient city, and in all probability it was his hostility to Christianity which had inspired him with the design; but unexpected events and physical obstacles* opposed the execution of this plan.

* By this expression, Schlegel does not mean to question the supernatural agency that produced those obstacles.—*Trans*

The Jewish covenant and the old revelation of the Hebrews formed the chief corner-stone on which Christianity was founded; and the first apostles of the new religion were all chosen from among that people. The scriptures of the new covenant were composed in the Greek tongue, and the first apologies, and other expositions of faith, or books of instruction by the primitive fathers, were mostly written in the same language. We may therefore consider this language as forming the second foundation-stone of the Christian edifice. Though the political consequences of the Macedonian conquests in Asia were not of any permanence, yet the influence which those conquests have exerted on the intellectual character of nations, the ascendancy which they gave to the Greeks over the whole civilized world of that period, were by no means unimportant. It was by means of these conquests that the philosophy and literature of the Greeks became, along with their language, predominant in Egypt and the Western countries of Asia; and hence this language was adopted as the original tongue of Christianity; because no other at that period had attained such intellectual refinement, or such general diffusion. As in human society every class and condition of life, nay, every individual, by the peculiar rights and advantages which each exclusively enjoys, still serves the community, and contributes to the weal of others, unconsciously and without precisely wishing it;

so in the history of the world, and in the progress of nations, all things are closely interlinked, and one serves as the instrument, auxiliary, or bond of union to the other; and it was not one of the least important results of the Greek science and language, that the two points wherein that nation had risen to the greatest eminence, and was endowed with the greatest power, should both have been so nearly allied with the cause of Christianity, even from its origin. The Roman empire was the third foundation-stone of the Christian religion; for its vast extent facilitated in a singular manner the early and very rapid diffusion of Christianity, and formed indeed the ground-work on which the fabric of the new church was first constructed.

In the history of the primitive church, historians are wont to separate the different branches of their subject, which form so many different parts of a single whole, and thus to describe separately the dogmas and doctrines of the church, its holy rites and sacraments, its liturgies and festivals, and next its moral condition and external relations; and this division of the subject may, no doubt, very well answer the special design of such ecclesiastical histories. But if we wish to take a more general view of the subject, to seize the spirit of Christianity, and form a just, true and lively conception of the primitive church, we must be particularly careful not to forget in the investigation of those

several heads, that they formed one undivided and living whole in the eyes of the first Christians, amid the overflowing fulness of a new moral life; and of this spirit of unity, as well as of the wonderful energy of faith and love which was its never-failing source, it is almost impossible for us to form a full and adequate notion. Christianity in its primitive influence, was like an electric stroke, which traversed the world with the rapidity of lightning—like a magnetic fluid of life, which united even the most distant members of humanity in one animating pulsation. Public prayer and the sacred mysteries formed a stronger and closer bond of love among men, than the still sacred ties of kindred and earthly affection. Some persons have affected to compare the secret assemblies of the primitive Christians with the pagan Mysteries; and undoubtedly it was only in secret, and in the retired and obscure oratory, that the first followers of Christ could gather together amid the fury of general persecution. But, from a competent knowledge which we possess of the import of those pagan Mysteries, they had about as much resemblance to the religious assemblies of the primitive Christians, as the divine sacrifice of holy commemoration, and the chalice consecrated with the blood of the eternal Covenant, bore to the human sacrifices of the Cainites. The Christians saw and felt the presence of their invisible King and eternal Lord; and when their souls overflowed with the plenitude of

spiritual and heavenly life, how could they value earthly existence, and how must they not have been willing to sacrifice it in the struggle against the powers of darkness; for that struggle formed the whole and proper business of their lives?—Hence we can understand the reason of the otherwise incredibly rapid diffusion of Christianity through all the provinces, and even sometimes beyond the limits, of the vast empire of Rome;—like a heavenly flame, it ran through all life, kindling, where it found congenial sympathy, all that it touched into a kindred fervour. Hence, along with that mighty spirit of love which produced so rapid a spread of the Christian religion, and which united in the closest bonds the first Christian communities, that energy of faith which inspired such heroic fortitude under the dreadful and oft renewed persecutions of the Romans. The first persecution under Nero was only a momentary freak of blood-thirsty tyranny—a passing trait of that monster's cruelty. The first regular edict against the Christians in the Roman empire was passed by Domitian in the 87th year of our era, and, according to a custom which had been borrowed from the Jews, he assimilated the offence of dissent from the national religion to the crime of high treason. The better Nerva softened the rigour of this law, and declared that the denunciations of slaves against their masters were not to be received, but, on the contrary, such informers were to be severely punished. Trajan

also, on the before-mentioned report of the younger Pliny, decided, in the 120th year of our era, that the Christians, who were then uncommonly numerous, were not to be sought after, but that, when denounced, they should be punished according to the law existing against such religious associations and communities. But notwithstanding all these apparent mitigations of severity introduced by the better emperors, the criminal jurisprudence of the Romans, like their foreign warfare, ever remained most atrocious; and the passages and allusions which are to be found in ancient historians, concur with the general voice of Christian tradition in stating the prodigious cruelties inflicted on the Christians in those persecutions. In general Hadrian pursued that milder and middle course of policy which Trajan had commenced before him; he approved of legal and judicial persecutions against the Christians, but he strictly prohibited those tumultuary attacks which were the mere ebullitions of popular hatred. With many vicissitudes, Christianity remained in this state until the reign of Diocletian, who, pursuing a far more systematic plan than most of his predecessors, attempted entirely to root it out; but this was no longer possible, and the growing church received its first formal edict of pacification at the hands of the emperor Constantine. The pagan enthusiast Julian attempted a second time to subvert it, but it was now too late. In the struggle against pagan cruelty and Roman

persecution, Christianity had come off victorious; in bondage, and under every species of suffering, it had proved the invincible might of the divine arm;—and, next to the apostles, the martyrs, so highly revered by the gratitude of Christians, must occupy the second place among those who were instrumental in bringing about this mighty renovation of society, and who sealed their efforts with their blood. But we must not imagine that the martyrs, as mere men, and by their unassisted strength, could have endured such dreadful torments with such unshaken constancy; or, again, that they were the mere unconscious instruments of a divine fatality, without the co-operation of their free, clear and steadfast will. By the side of those who were constant, many individuals were found that were not so, —many, who, overcome by suffering, delivered up the holy scriptures, or entirely apostatized from the faith and sacrificed to idols; so that it was afterwards a matter of dispute, how far the *lapsed* could be pardoned and received again into the church.

After that period was past which had witnessed the reign of those inhuman tyrants that immediately succeeded Augustus, several of the more virtuous emperors sought by various expedients to bring about the moral regeneration of the people and empire of Rome. Trajan, who possessed much of the rectitude and old martial virtues that belonged to the elder and better period of Rome, sought to introduce these again;

and, though the effects of his policy were transient, they were still beneficial. Hadrian endeavoured to reanimate paganism, and to make it once more the basis of the empire and of public life; for this purpose, he had recourse especially to the more profound and austere Theology of Egypt; and that new Egyptian style, which characterizes the later monuments of Roman art, was connected with the emperor's predilection for the old religion of Egypt. But the healthy vigour, the moral regeneration, of public life, and of the empire itself, could not now be obtained by the maintenance, or firmer consolidation, of the pagan religion; on the contrary, it is in the erroneous nature of the primitive paganism of Rome that we must seek for the principal cause why, even in that elder period now so highly extolled, and which certainly was at least better, a true, pure, and stable system of morals and politics could never take root and flourish. Under the two Antonines, the severe morality of Stoicism was regarded as the vital principle of moral regeneration, and political reform, and a practical application of its principles was sought for on all sides. And certainly if the stoical philosophy, with its mere dead letter of rigid justice, and correct morality, unsupported by the divine maxims of right faith, and that spirit of exalted love which true faith alone can impart, could have accomplished this high design;—if it had possessed within itself this mighty source, this creative energy of moral

and social life; the serious determination and personal virtues of those imperial stoics might indeed have promised to the declining age of Rome the fulfilment of the last hope to which Paganism yet clung. But that which doth not rest on the basis of truth can receive no life from any external cause; and it can impart no life to any thing without, because it is decayed within, and when the illusive bloom of first youth has fled, it sinks inevitably into its native corruption. "When the Lord doth not build the house," saith the Psalmist, "those who would build it labour in vain." To the better times that had witnessed the rule of the three or four great monarchs we have mentioned, the reign of a Commodus succeeded; and thus the Empire, down to the time of Diocletian, beheld a constant mutation of rulers, sometimes benevolent, or at least comparatively good, whose reigns however were often but of short duration, sometimes weak and spiritless, and sometimes again tyrants of the most abject and atrocious cast. Among these latter Sovereigns, however, who in cruelty and arbitrary caprice, resembled the first successors of Augustus, there were no characters possessed of that strong Roman sense which distinguished Tiberius; and the empire in their hands assumed daily more and more a thoroughly effeminate and oriental complexion.

Nothing was more subject to chance than the right of succession in the Roman empire, where the arbitrary application of the Roman

principle of adoption opened a wide field to the contention of parties; without including the frequent recurrence of conspiraces in a military empire, which, as it was formed by a military conspiracy, ever retained the stamp of its origin. Augustus had employed his whole life, not without apparent success, for a time at least, in endeavouring to give to authority, acquired by force of arms, the colour and forms of legitimacy. But how could it be ever forgotten that he, as well as Cæsar, had been raised to the Imperial throne by the army, and amid the struggles of factions, conspiracies, and civil wars. The soldiers knew this, and recollected but too well the source whence the supreme power in the state had emanated. The influence of the Prætorians, especially, was, from their origin, very considerable, as they surrounded the Emperor, and formed his body-guard. By virtue of his office the leader of the Prætorians had a sort of negative and controlling power, like that of the Censor and popular Tribune in the ancient republic, except that this functionary wielded the sword,—a power in some degree acknowledged by the Emperor himself, as it was accounted one of the highest merits of Trajan, that to the chief of that troop which defended the person, and often decided the fate, of the Emperor, he delivered the sword with these words: "For me, if I govern well—against me, if I should become a tyrant."

Thus the empire was entirely abandoned to

chance and caprice, and as its origin was military, it remained unto the end essentially a military despotism. The more powerful legions that were quartered in the most important provinces, especially in those of the frontiers, soon began to feel that they were far superior in numbers and strength to the effeminate Prætorians of the capital. Several emperors were elected and proclaimed by these legions; and in the number, such even as were not Romans, and were of barbarian extraction; for it happened that, in the provincial legions, many foreigners, especially Germans, were engaged in the Roman service in the provinces on the North-western frontier. Several of the emperors thus chosen by the legions, continued to reside where the centre of their power existed—in the station, or in some provincial capital conveniently situated. The Senate had long been but a mere shadow of its former greatness; even the capital began to lose much of its importance.

At the same time the repeated incursions of the Northern nations ever rendered a general invasion more imminent, and the disaster, which men had foreseen from afar, appeared ever nearer its accomplishment. Already the first irruption of the Cimbri and Teutones, when not merely an army for the sake of booty, or to plant a military colony, but a whole tribe with wives and children had migrated into the Roman territory, threw Rome into consternation during the civil

wars, when she was at the very height of her military prowess. Cæsar had spared no exertion to reduce Gaul to complete subjection, and this country had ever since adopted more and more the language and customs of Rome. He experienced from no people such vigorous resistance, as from the Germanic tribes; and to protect against these nations the safety of the empire, by strongly fortifying the banks of the Rhine and Danube, constituted afterwards the first concern of the Roman Emperors. What a shock Augustus received from the defeat of Varus, by the German Arminius in his native woods! Even under the martial Trajan, who was almost the last conqueror in the line of Roman Emperors, men began to entertain serious apprehensions of the invasion of the Germanic tribes. The first great irruption was that of the Alemanni, who, under Marcus Aurelius burst into the Rhætian provinces, while similar movements occurred in Noricum and eastward towards Pannonia. However, Marcus Aurelius, by an energetic and successful resistance, repelled this first attempt, and thus was the means of deterring the barbarians for a long time from similar enterprises; and a hundred years elapsed before Aurelian drove them again from Italy, over the Alps as far as the Lech. Among the German nations, the Goths, who from the Scandinavian Isles had penetrated far into the interior of Germany, particularly towards the eastern, as afterwards towards the western, parts of

that country, were pre-eminent in power. They could not be prevented from obtaining a firm footing in the North-eastern provinces, by the Black Sea. The Emperor Decius perished in the war against this people; and the Romans were obliged to surrender to them by a formal treaty, the further Dacia. Constantine, indeed, was victorious in the war he waged against them; but he preferred to conclude an advantageous peace, to gain their friendship, and enlist their youth in the service of the Roman armies. Of the later reigns that of Diocletian displayed the greatest energy; but his cruel persecution of the Christians was, even to judge from the mere external state of society, as little adapted to the spirit of the age as it was reprehensible in itself, and hence his design remained unaccomplished. Although, after his abdication, Diocletian showed himself a thorough Roman in private life, yet, while he swayed the sceptre, he deemed it expedient to surround the throne with all the pomp and forms of Asiatic homage. The division of the empire among several sovereigns appeared then, as afterwards, under Constantine and his successors, an unavoidable and necessary evil; or, in other words, the several parts and members of the vast body of the Roman Empire, which approached nearer and nearer to its dissolution, began to fall to pieces, and that division itself accelerated again the destruction of the state, as it became the occasion of internal discord, and universal convulsion in the Roman

world. The revolution accomplished by Constantine, indeed, might have become a real, and by far the most comprehensive, regeneration of the Roman state, as it substituted for its originally defective, and now completely rotten, foundation of Paganism, a new principle of life, a higher and more potent energy of divine truth and eternal justice. But Christianity had not yet near become the universal religion of the people, and Empire of Rome — otherwise the great re-action, which took place under Julian, had not been possible. The peasantry, in particular, continued for a long time yet attached to the old idolatry; and hence the name of Pagans was derived.* Even Constantine, though he publicly declared himself a convert to Christianity, still did not dare to receive baptism immediately, and thus enter fully into the great community of Christians. The administration of the Roman state was so completely interwoven with Pagan rites and Pagan doctrines, that, from an act of this public nature, dangerous collisions might have at first easily ensued. On the whole, the old Roman maxims and principles of state-policy continued to prevail, even for a long time after the reign of Constantine; and the period had not yet arrived when Christianity was to work a fundamental reform throughout the whole political world, — and a Christian government, if I may so speak, was

* From the Latin word *Pagus*, a rural district.

to be established and organized on that eternal basis, and to strike deep root and grow into the faith and life of the people, and into their habits and their feelings; but this great revolution was reserved for another and a later period.

END OF LECTURE X.

LECTURE XI.

Of the ancient Germans, and of the invasion of the Northern tribes.—The march of Nature in the historical development of Nations.—Further diffusion and internal consolidation of Christianity.—Great corruption of the world.—Rise of Mahometanism.

THE idolatry of the ancient Germans, like the less poetical, less artificial, and less elaborate Paganism of all primitive nations, consisted in a simple adoration of Nature, such as existed among the Persians, with whom they had a very close affinity in race and in language. Thus the objects of their worship were the stars, the sun and the moon, the celestial spirits, the various powers and elements of Nature, and in particular the mother earth, under the name of the goddess Hertha. In the German and English names for the days of the week, the names of the gods, Thun, Wodan, Thor, and Freya, are still preserved; and these in the Germanic mythology correspond to the planets, most clearly visible from our globe—Mars, Mercury, Jupiter,

and Venus; as it is also from these the Romanic languages have taken the names of the week-days. It does not appear, indeed, that there existed in Germany quite so powerful, influential, and well-organized a body of priests, as the Druids composed in Gaul; and we can only discover the existence of certain secret rites and mysteries of a very primitive simplicity; as, for instance, the human sacrifice which was offered to the lake Hertha, in the Isle of Rugen, when a young man and maiden were thrown into its solitary waters. It was in the obscurity of woods, under the sacred oak, or by the Linden, the tree of Northern enchantment, and on the mountain-tops, they celebrated their rites, festivals, and entertainments, or arranged the Runic sticks to search into futurity; and as, among the Greeks, the Delphic oracle in moments of general danger was consulted, and gave its advice on the most important concerns of the nation; so the prophetesses and sybils of the North, like the Velleda mentioned by the Romans, exerted a very decisive influence on the public councils. Old poetical traditions of gods, heroes, giants, and spirits (in many respects like those of Persia), formed the key-stone of the sacred recollections and national existence of the Germanic nations.

Their original descent from Asia remained ever strong and lively in their remembrance, and allusions to it were interwoven into the whole body of their traditionary poetry; and as

in the Persian traditions, the Arii are celebrated as the most generous and heroic nation of the primitive ages, so the Asae occupy the most distinguished place in the Northern mythology. In the Scandinavian North, which remained Pagan for many centuries after Germany had become Christian, there are still extant many monuments and songs of a similar purport and strain; and of these, indeed, abundant vestiges are to be found every-where. These old historical traditions and this hereditary poetry had often a very powerful influence on real life, and on the martial enterprises and achievements of the tribes; and as in the heroic ages of the Greeks, according to the Homeric description, so in those times the bard, proclaiming the history of gods and heroes, and attending on the person of the prince or general of the army, was by no means an unimportant personage.

A monarchy of such wide extent, as the ancient kingdom of Persia, did not exist in Germany. The constitution, if we can apply such a term to the wild freedom of those early ages, was more like that of Greece in the heroic times, when she was governed by her noble families, and her territory was divided into a number of petty kingdoms, which only rarely united in a great league for a common enterprise. This primitive Germanic constitution was a very simple and free aristocracy of Nature. The tribe that composed the nation was an union or confederacy of freemen and nobles under an here-

ditary tribe-prince, or chosen leader; and it was only at a later period that among some of the Germanic nations, this confederacy gave way to a regular regal government. Every freeman, and every man having a right to bear arms, was a member of the Hermannia, which was afterwards called the arriere-ban; and it was this ancient Hermannia that gave rise to the Roman name for Germany. The land was cultivated by bondsmen and slaves, who had been either purchased, or taken prisoners in war, or were the conquered remnant of the ancient inhabitants of the country, or even men who for some crime had forfeited their freedom and nobility. When the Romans became better acquainted with the Germanic nations, the latter had partly become an agricultural people; and they observed that very primitive custom of letting their fields lie alternately in fallow—a custom which has been so long retained in the North of Germany, under the name of *dreyfelder-wirthschaft*. Private property in land itself was not yet marked out nor enclosed within any exact limits—there was still much common land, and this was naturally an inducement for the different tribes, whenever they had a favourable opportunity, to change their abode and migrate. But this infant agriculture was still held subordinate to the occupations of the chace and of the pastoral life, which furnished the principal means of subsistence. The different forests that still exist in Germany are merely the re-

maining fragments of the one, vast, boundless Hercynian forest, that once extended through the whole interior of the country. From the quantity of wood that yet remained, the soil of Germany was much more marshy, and its atmosphere incomparably colder, than at the present day. The buffalo and the elk, which at present are so very rarely to be met with in Germany, were then animals indigenous to our country.

That this condition of the soil, and this unsettled mode of life, in a growing population are circumstances quite sufficient to account for a partial, though (without other co-operating causes) not perhaps for the general, emigration of a whole tribe, must be evident to every person. Internal factions and wars are quite adequate causes for the emigration of a whole tribe, or, at least, of a considerable portion. In the early ages it was customary, when the population became too numerous, for the younger brothers, or a certain number of youths chosen by lot, to quit their country under the guidance of a leader of their choice, or of one marked out by Fame, and, proceeding on an expedition of adventure, conquer other homes for themselves, and seek out their fortunes towards the east, or towards the west, or beneath the fairer sky of a southern region. Even in a more advanced, nay in the most advanced, stage of civilization, every state and nation is necessitated by nature, if I may so speak, to dis-

burthen itself of a redundant population, and to extend itself in new settlements—in one word, to found colonies, and to possess colonies. This is the standing law,—the fundamental rule of health in the progressive development of nations; and where this necessity does not exist in an equal degree, we must consider it only a case of exception, and we shall be sure to find that some special cause precludes the operation of this principle for a time: for, sooner or later, nature will force us to this expedient. The commercial colonies of the Phœnicians and Greeks were in part founded, and certainly at least defended, extended and consolidated by force of arms; and it is only by similar means, that in modern times, Mexico and Peru have become colonies of Spain.

But in those early ages, and among those northern, warlike children of nature, this natural necessity of emigration could take no other course, nor have any other object but a military settlement. Such was the result of the first irruption of the northern nations, mentioned in history—the expedition of the Gauls into Thrace, which was soon succeeded by a second of a similar kind under Brennus; when that Gallic general marched at the head of his troops into Macedon and Greece, and became master of the rich temple of Apollo at Delphi, and of all its accumulated treasures. A remnant of these troops finally fixed their abode in Asia Minor, and established a Gallic settlement in a province

which from them received the name of *Galatia*. In this first great expedition, or irruption of the northern nations, the names of almost all the tribes and their leaders are Celtic; still some few German names are found amongst them; and this may be easily accounted for, when we recollect that the Gauls, who were then widely spread, and inhabited even the North of Italy, were undoubtedly in possession of most of the Alpine countries, and thus may easily have engaged in their service some German tribes. Who knows but what some marvellous tradition, and fabulous account of the lovely climate and delicious fruits of the Southern regions, together with recollections of their original descent from the Southern nations of Asia, may have contributed to bring the Cimbri and Teutones from the islands of Scandinavia to the plains of Italy? Had the Romans not dreaded the dangerous precedent, and had they but allotted lands to these nations, they might easily have kept terms of peace with them, and enlisted their most valiant youth in the service of their legions; as, indeed, under the later emperors, the flower of their troops was selected from the Gothic tribes.

But the case was widely different when the relations of peace and war, the proximity of frontiers, and the occupation of the German territory, brought the Romans in closer contact with the Germanic nations; as, for instance, in the campaigns which Cæsar conducted against

the chief of the Suevi, Ariovistus; Tiberius against Maroboduus, king of the Marcomanni; and the general of Augustus against the Saxon prince, Hermann. Here both parties diligently studied and observed each other's excellencies and defects, and mixed in the most various intercourse. Thus Hermann's father lived among the Romans; his brother bore a Roman name; and his nephew was educated at Rome. Maroboduus himself repaired thither, desirous like a prudent foe, to examine with his own eyes the capital of Roman greatness and power. Among the German tribes and their leaders, factions were sometimes formed even against Hermann and Maroboduus; and at a later period, these divisions had no inconsiderable influence on the relations of the Germanic nations with the Romans, and on their foreign enterprizes. The Roman frontier on the banks of the Rhine and the Danube, fortified by a long line of castles, fortresses, and cities, lay for the most part within the German territory, and was inhabited by some German tribes, or German settlers that had been attracted thither. Here the nations of Germany saw their brethren of a kindred race, living indeed under the controul of Roman laws, which those, who still retained their freedom, sought to repel by force of arms; but on the other hand, they observed the high cultivation of a country, blest with all the advantages of civilization, and adorned with so many of the arts of life, with the culture of the

vine, and a variety of the most exquisite fruits. And when, in the course of the almost incessant wars waged on the frontier, they either encountered a feeble resistance, or observed some defect in the mode of Roman defence, the desire to prosecute their fortune, and penetrate into those beautiful countries, must have considerably augmented. As, three centuries ago, the fabulous accounts of treasures of gold, and rich ores of silver, to be found in America, drew hosts of Spanish and other European adventurers over the Atlantic to the shores of the newly-discovered continent; so the charms of a southern sky, the rich fruits, the vineyards, the blooming gardens of a warm, lovely and highly cultivated region, wrought powerfully on the imaginations of the Northerns, and were often the motive of their expeditions and armed migrations.

The first irruptions of the Alemanni in the reign of Marcus Aurelius, and subsequent to it, appear to have arisen immediately and naturally, (as I have said,) out of the perpetual wars waged on the frontier, on the first advantage which those barbarians obtained over the Romans, and on the first defect or weakness which they espied in the defensive operations of their enemies. That the warfare on the frontier was perpetuated almost without intermission, it is the more natural to suppose, since the Germanic nations by two armed confederacies of their tribes, had on their side opposed to the

fortifications of the Roman boundaries a living frontier-wall. The name of the Marcomanni served to designate not a particular tribe, but an armed confederation for the defence of the whole nation; and the same remark holds good of the Alemanni. In the descriptions which the Romans have given of Germany, they were occasionally led, by their ignorance of the language, to mistake a league for a people, and to apply to a tribe the denomination intended to denote a district or a custom. But in these accounts it is very easy to trace the three or four leading nations of Germany, that figure afterwards in its history, and which, on the dissolution of the Roman empire, possessed themselves of its provinces, spread through the different Romanic countries, and in the course of time became the founders of the modern European states.

These three principal nations of Germany (and such they were considered by the Romans,) were the Suevi, the Saxons, and the Goths, who may be best distinguished by the course of the rivers, which flowed through the countries they inhabited. The whole of that extensive country, afterwards called Ancient Saxony, and which lay along the course and embouchures of the Elbe, the Eyder, the Ems and the Weser, including the whole sea-coast with Jutland and Denmark, all the Rhenish Netherlands with the Batavian shores, was inhabited by the Saxons; a people (for it was only later their name was

explained from a peculiar national weapon, or species of sword,) attached to the soil, and who were of all the Germanic tribes the least prone to emigration; for, as mariners, they kept to the sea-coasts, and the banks of rivers. It was only at the period when the tide of emigration had reached its highest point that the Saxons, issuing from their native seat, not only possessed themselves of, but as it were, peopled anew, the great British Isle; and it is very possible that this not widely dispersed, but closely connected low-German race, then out-numbered all the other nations of Germany. It was on the banks of the Upper Rhine and the Upper Danube that lay the original seat of the Suevi, a race perhaps more mixed, who occur in history under the name of the Alemanni, and were distinguished for a restless spirit of adventure and migratory enterprize. The name of the Franks, a people occupying so important a place in later history, denoted originally rather a league than a particular nation; and as their geographical seat lay between those of the Seuvi and the Saxons, they were akin in character and by descent to both those nations. In their manners and mode of government they resembled the Alemanni; while in race and language they were originally more nearly allied to the Saxons. If the Franks are to be considered a distinct nation, it is the ancient Catti or Hessians (who have ever been included among that people) that we must regard as the main stock of the whole race.

But the second great primitive and leading race among the Germanic nations were the Goths, a people whose territory spread from the Scandinavian Peninsula, and the shores of the Baltic, along the whole course of the Vistula, as far as the Black Sea. Their language, as it exists in the yet extant Gothic bible of Ulphilas, is what we would now call the high Dutch dialect; though its form is more ancient, and is distinguished for a certain purity of structure, not without its peculiar charm. This Gothic dialect is, in tone and form, less akin to the Saxon and Scandinavian languages, except in so far as the branches of a stem, the nearer we approach the roots, reveal more clearly their common origin. In the Scandinavian North, the territories of these two principal Germanic races, the Goths and the Saxons, were contiguous; and, proceeding from this common source, the two nations branched out into separate and various streams. Of a similar, or at least of a kindred, race to the Goths, were the Burgundians and Vandals, who afterwards founded the kingdoms of that name in Gaul and Spain. Hereditary monarchy attained to a more settled form among the Goths than among any other of the Germanic nations; and, divided between two different dynasties, the Ostro-Goths were subject to the heroic family of the Amali, and the Visi-Goths to that of the Balti. The Roman historians of that age often speak of their mar-

tial courage and magnanimity, as well as of their lofty and commanding stature.

The real emigration of the Northern tribes originated solely and immediately with the Goths; and, in the first period, was not produced by any commotion among the Asiatic nations, as was afterwards the case. As early as the third century, the Goths took possession of the countries situated on the Northern coast of the Euxine, and penetrated into Greece as far as Athens. The Emperor Decius fell in the war against them, and in the peace which they concluded with Aurelian, they retained the further Dacia which had been previously surrendered. They now became allies of the Romans, who were happy enough to cultivate the relations of peace with them, and to recruit their legions with the Gothic youth. A hundred years later, the Goths on the death of their king Hermanric, were disturbed in their settlements near the Black Sea by the Huns: a people who, according to the Chinese annals, originally inhabited the Northern frontier of China towards the Eastern parts of the Middle Asia, and who afterwards, bearing down westward, took up their abode for a long time on the Eastern shores of the Caspian, till at last they forced their way into the Caucasian regions, and the territory of the Goths on the borders of the Black Sea.

It was only now, when the minds of the German tribes of the West were at the same time rising to a higher and higher pitch of excite-

ment, and the old Empire of Rome was on every side crumbling into ruins, that the tide of Northern emigration burst out in all its full and fearful violence. In the first irruptions, the names of the different tribes, as well as of their leaders, were almost all without exception German; but now we meet with many foreign names, which discover not only the Asiatic Huns, but the Sclavonian, and even perhaps, occasionally, the Finnish tribes, that were undoubtedly then intermingled with the Goths in the vast empire of the latter. For fifty years after the first invasion, the Huns remained at peace in their new settlements between the Theiss and the Danube, nor did they disturb the Roman Empire till the time of Attila. The Goths offered to defend the frontier against these barbarians, and received in return the province to the south of the Danube.

The Goths readily embraced Christianity; but they received it in the Arian form; for at the time when religious instructors and the Gothic bishop Ulphilas were sent from Constantinople, the Arian party had the ascendancy in that capital. This circumstance had afterwards the most fatal influence on the destinies of the Roman Empire; for one of the chief causes of its downfal was this new contest in religious matters. It was on this very account the second conquest of Rome by the Vandal King Genseric was attended with far more devastation than the first under the Visi-Goth King Alaric; for the

former persecuted the Catholic church with all the animosity of an Arian. The Goths were not animated by feelings of hostility towards the Romans; but were rather disposed to admire the excellence and superiority of their civilization. When the Emperor Valens perished in the Gothic war, which Roman treachery had occasioned, Theodosius contrived to conclude an advantageous peace with this people, when they stood at the very gates of Constantinople, took forty thousand of their troops into his pay, and renewed the armed confederacy of the Goths which Constantine had formed. When the Gothic prince Athanaric had contemplated with astonishment the pomp and splendour of Constantinople, and had conceived sentiments of respect for the personal character of Theodosius; the Goths, moved by the representations of their prince, declared to Theodosius that as long as he lived, they wished to have no other king but himself. But the case was altered under the sons of Theodosius; and, to defend themselves from this people, these princes knew no other expedient than to let loose on Italy these barbarians, and to divert and point the storm of invasion towards that quarter. This policy produced the expedition of the Visi-Goth King Alaric to Rome, and the first conquest of the eternal and seven-hilled city.

The disputes between Rome and the new Byzantine court did not a little contribute to the downfal of the Roman Empire; and the dex-

terity, or rather craftiness, which the politicians of Constantinople displayed on this, as on many other occasions, was often attended with consequences the most ruinous to Italy. As the universal empire of Rome had grown out of civil war, so it was undermined and ruined more by internal discord and corruption, than by the power of the Goths; a nation with whom the Romans might easily have contracted relations of amity, and induced to fraternize, and become by degrees one people with themselves; and indeed, at various periods, the policy of the better Emperors had prepared the way for such an union. As, of all the Germanic nations, the Goths were the most powerful; and as their assistance would have enabled the Romans to resist all the other tribes; such an alliance, as I here speak of, would have accomplished by pacific means the purpose of the great Northern migration, namely, the union of the sound, vigorous, native spirit of the Germans with the civilization of the Romans (then indeed sunk to the lowest state of debasement), and whose polity and public life Christianity itself was unable totally to regenerate. And thus a long intermediate period of conflict and confusion would have been rendered unnecessary.

During the troubles which followed the first conquest of Rome by Alaric, the Romans invoked from Africa the aid of Genseric, King of the Vandals,—a prince who both as a warrior, and as a ruler, was far more cruel than Alaric,

and who every where spread terror on his march. Jealous and suspicious of the Goths, he invited into Italy Attila, with all the nations which his martial prowess had subjected or attached to his authority, and occasioned the expedition of the latter into the West, where, in the great battle on the banks of the Marna, the Goths constituted the main portion of both the contending armies. The Huns and some other of the invading nations were still Pagans; and the history of that age amply demonstrated that wars are ever more destructive in proportion as the armies are more numerous, the throng of armed multitudes more dense, and the nations composing them more various and dissimilar. Still the general oppression, anarchy, desolation, and misery, in those times, are not to be traced solely to wars and battles; for, during the most flourishing and civilized ages of ancient Rome, wars were almost perpetually waged, and were generally more, and certainly not less, bloody and destructive than the present. The Bishop of Rome contrived to avert the torrent of hostilities from his capital, and the city was spared. On the death of Attila, the Huns ceased to be formidable; for the power of that prince, which depended far less on their numbers, than on his own military prowess and glory, perished at once with him.

Odoacer, Prince of the Heruli and Rugians, (nations also Gothic) was called to the Empire of Rome from the banks of the Danube. From

his conquest dates the downfal of the Western Empire, and the last Roman youth who was yet dignified with the name of emperor, was called Romulus, 1228 years after the first Romulus,—the founder of the eternal city—a city which after it had lost its outward and political power, became the centre of a vast sacerdotal dominion, and again occupied in succeeding times a mighty and important place in history. When the sway of the Heruli became an object of detestation in Rome and Italy, the Greek Emperor Zeno, in a formal document, conferred on the Ostro-Goth King Theodoric, who had been educated at Constantinople, the dominion of Italy; and the latter, after his victory over Odoacer, assumed the Roman purple, in lieu of the Gothic dress. He was highly esteemed in Rome, and by all the Germanic nations; his name, like that of Charlemagne after him, was celebrated in the heroic songs of the Germans, while political writers and historical critics commend alike his talents and his virtues. His rule was generous and noble; he loved and honoured the arts and sciences which his age still possessed, and the last of Roman writers, Cassiodorius and Boethius, were the ornaments of his reign. Factions which arose on the death of this great prince, and a crime perpetrated on the relics of his house,* afforded the active Emperor of the

* Schlegel alludes to the murder of Amalasontha, daughter of Theodoric, and to the usurpation of Theodatus.—*Trans.*

East, Justinian, an opportunity to re-establish the Greek sway in Italy, by means of his successful General, Belisarius. Military commanders like Belisarius, and some worthier and more enterprizing princes on the throne of Byzantium, as well as that systematic course of policy I have before described, maintained the Byzantine Empire; while Rome itself was ruined, and Italy fell under the dominion of the Lombards, who succeeded the Goths, and were succeeded in their turn by the Franks—under whom the Roman Empire of Germany was re-established, and Rome became, and continued, united with that empire during the middle ages, though for the most part only in name.

This rapid but faithful sketch of the migration of the Northern nations seemed necessary to enable us to form a right opinion on this subject. For this period, which laid the mighty foundation on which the whole Teutonico-Romanic structure of the institutions, laws, manners, languages, opinions, and even the peculiar imaginative character of modern European nations, has been raised, has not always been fully understood, or justly appreciated by many writers, either led away by a partial enthusiasm for the antique, or enthralled by modern opinions and prejudices — writers who wish to trace in all parts of creation, and even in universal history, the same dead uniformity and monotony of plan. It is by no means common to meet with an Historical inquirer, possessing a flexibility of fancy,

a justness of feeling, and a soundness and correctness of judgment, capable of transporting him into the remote ages of history, and the mythic antiquity of nations. But in the present instance, and throughout the whole of this chaotic epoch, when the old fictions of the Titanic wars appear to be actually realized, and when the marvellous of events and sentiments is to be found in the obscure and meagre chronicles of that age, which often unite fragments of popular mythology and Pagan tradition, with real historic incidents; it is perhaps still more difficult to form an accurate judgment, and to discriminate between the elements of truth and falsehood. As we cannot figure to ourselves such a state of anarchy, we are unable to comprehend it. We should bear in mind how often in nature the fairest bloom of vegetation, and the richest fullness of organic life, spring out of a state of confusion and chaos, when the elemental powers, after a long strife and conflict, settle at last into a state of harmonious equipoise, unite and fructify, and in some creative moment, when the struggle of labour is over, give birth to new and more beautiful forms of existence. Ancient Egypt was indebted for its fertility to the periodic inundations of the Nile, which, had they not been provided against by mounds and dams, would have occasioned the utmost desolation. Nay, doth not this earth we inhabit, and which nourishes us, with all that fair and blooming vegetation spread over its surface, with all that bound-

less wealth and variety of animal life, and with all the civility and refinement of man's existence, whose abode it constitutes; doth not this earth, I say, teeming as it doth with fertility and life, rest on the gigantic remains of a primitive world submerged by the old floods, and which was often torn, convulsed and rent asunder by the eruptions of subterraneous fire? Well, the migration of the Northern nations brought about a sort of chaotic struggle between the various elements of society — it was a new Ogygean inundation of nations in the historical ages—but it laid the fruitful soil—the historical foundation of a new moral and intellectual form of life. This vast flux and reflux of nations, rolling in incessant waves from the East to the West, and from the North to the South, and back again to the East and to the North, this emission of immense armies issuing in all directions from a common centre, and returning again to that centre from every side — all this vast movement must be looked upon as a strife and contention between the elemental powers of human society. The first effect, indeed, of such a strife of nature's elements let loose is to destroy, or at least, to impair all existing organic forms; and it must be confessed, this wild and protracted state of confusion and anarchy does not present the most pleasing and auspicious aspect to the eye of the historical observer. With respect to the latter circumstance, we must recollect that the extremely slow progress, and

often unexpected delays, in the advancement of human society, correspond not always, and indeed rarely, to our wishes and expectations; while, on the other hand, there are epochs in history, when we are amazed by the sudden out-burst of the most extraordinary events, and when a great splendour of moral and intellectual life surprises us of a sudden, like a bright morning in Spring. In other words, there is a strong, wise and Fatherly hand which guides and conducts the destinies of individuals, as well as the march of society, and the course of ages; or as the Scripture, with touching simplicity, saith, "the Father hath reserved times unto himself;" and Time in his march keepeth not pace with the rapidity of our desires, nor moveth according to our views and hopes. But whatever may be, if I may so speak, the fearful tardiness, wherewith the views of Providence over the destinies of the human race are accomplished;—a tardiness, whereof man has to bear the greatest blame; or whatever may be, if I may so say, the long delays of divine justice—the procrastination of the period of grace;—it cannot be doubted that the general result of the great Northern migration was most salutary, and that that mixture of the Germanic tribes with the degenerate population of Rome—that alliance between the healthy, vigorous, and native intellectual energy of Germany, and the rapidly decaying civilization of Rome, were productive of the mightiest and most beneficial conse-

quences. Whoever doubts the truth of this observation, may cure his scepticism by comparing the splendour, activity and variety in the political and intellectual existence of the modern European states, that have sprung out of this union of the Germanic and Romanic nations, with the dull monotony, the thorough moral and intellectual stupor which prevailed in the later Byzantine Empire.

But I have more than once observed that, independently of that progressive power of reason, inherent in all the forms and departments of human activity; and independently of the operations of Divine Providence, which form that high mysterious chain of unity which links together the different periods of man's social progress; independently, I say, of all these, there is a law of nature—a high, and secret principle of nature, presiding over the life and growth of human society—which, if kept in due subordination to the higher principle of Providence, will not be found incompatible with it. The prevalence of this law of nature may be clearly traced in the history of mankind, and even in that of particular nations, when their social progress is not impeded or interrupted by violent or irregular causes. And in following the current of events in History, the historical observer can accurately distinguish the different periods of national developement—the first period of artless, yet marvellous, childhood — the next of the first bloom and flush

of youth — later, the maturer vigour and activity of manhood—and at last the symptoms of approaching age, a state of general decay, and second childishness. This energy of nature, which, together with the other, higher and divine principle of human destiny, is inherent in mankind, displays itself even in the sphere of intellect, and particularly in the flourishing eras of art and science. It is even still more, or at least quite as, perceptible in those creative moments already described, of a new, though perhaps, at first, a chaotic epoch of human society: so far, at least, as those plastic, eventful moments are not the mere offspring and counterfeit production of revolutionary violence—but have issued from the very well-spring of nature. When the latter is the case, it will be found that the whole tendency of these periods of extraordinary ferment in society is conducive to the extension of the divine principle, and to the promotion of the views of Providence, as was eminently the case in the era of the great Northern migrations; an era, when a catastrophe, at first the most appalling, led to the further triumph of Christianity, which conferred on those robust, Northern children of nature the high consecration of an empire, which thereby, in its ulterior progress, far outshone the Roman, or any other old Pagan domination. But unquestionably the two conflicting elements in that eventful period, which contained the first germs of all modern civilization

—the free-born energy of Germanic nature, and the Romanic refinement, science, and language, were happily blended and harmonized by the Christian religion only, which on that account must be regarded as the all-connecting bond—the one all-animating principle of social life in modern ages. But without that new element of vital power furnished by the Northern emigrations, Christianity alone would not have regenerated the degraded people of Rome, nor have restored its intellectual energy, then sunk to too low a state of debasement. Above all, the primitive, innate, and deeply rooted corruption of the Roman government was beyond the power of remedy, and could only be removed by time.

The evils of the age were indeed, universal; for, even in the bosom of Christianity, discord had broken out; and where even faith was preserved in its purity, there, to use the expression of Holy Writ, "much of first love was gone." But for this, the influence of Christianity on the Roman empire, and the Roman world, would have been far more extensive; and a miraculous cure would have been wrought on the moral distempers of society, as on the physical diseases of individuals. And as holy hermits were often able to command the elements of nature and the savage beasts of the desert; so a divine power, by its mild, conciliating, prompt and effective influence would in the first moment have allayed the wild jar and strife

of the social elements. But these effects were accomplished only by slow degrees, by the soothing influence of time, and by the gradual infusion of the spirit of Christianity into the human mind.

The progressive corruption and ever growing disorders of the Roman world were productive of consequences in some degree important to Christianity, particularly in relation to after-ages. To forsake and renounce that world of cruelty and vice, that kingdom of dissimulation, that age of confusion and barbarism, and to seek by preference an abode and asylum in the wilderness, in the neighbourhood of lions and other savage animals of the desert, required no extraordinary impulse of Christian feeling, and scarcely more than a high effort of human courage. And thus in that convulsed period of the Roman Empire, and under the accurst domination of its last tyrants, Christian anchorets peopled the solitudes of Thebais,—those solitudes where the old pyramids and other monuments of hoar antiquity still speak in mute signs to the traveller, their grave and earnest language. Self-contemplation did not shut up these Christian anchorites within a narrow and egotistical sphere of thought, as is the case with the Indian recluse, who, to outward appearance, leads the same mode of life. As the primitive Christians evinced the power of faith and charity by deeds and in sufferings, in words and in works of manifold kinds; so

prayer was to these solitaries the inward porch of a new and invisible world—a real business of life, and a bond of the closest and tenderest connection, whereby, though separated from the world, they remained, even at the remotest distance, intimately united with all who, like themselves, were firmly united to God.

Thus it was that the Primitive Christians displayed the power of divine Hope, and ardent Charity, not only in their heroic constancy under assaults, persecutions, sufferings and torments of all, even the most exquisite, kinds; but in their renunciation of society and of all earthly enjoyments, in their contempt and abandonment of a world, which seemed in truth eternally distracted and irretrievably undone. In the eremitical life, a simple handicraft was ordinarily coupled with the duty of spiritual contemplation. These first Christian Anchorites of Egypt were the original and model of all later monastic institutes; although, conformably to the living and quite practical spirit of Christianity, these institutes have generally admitted into their rules other useful and salutary exercises adapted either to the general circumstances of the age, or to the wants of individuals—such as the education of youth—the cultivation of the sciences—the relief of the poor—the care of the infirm—and the practice of other works of charity. The Anchorites, who lead a purely contemplative life, constitute a comparatively small and rare exception in the Christian church;

and they are tolerated only because the ways of human nature are so infinitely diversified, and often so strange and so singular.

To resist their internal foes, to withstand the assaults of the fiend—the spirit of discord and corruption, and to preserve inviolate the purity of morals, as well as of faith, the Primitive Christians as much needed the divine assistance, as to enable them to endure outwardly the torments of martyrdom, or to renounce in holy solitude the pleasures of the world. In this respect three different kinds of heresy, which were so many trials the Christian religion had to sustain, are well worthy of our attention. From the very birth of Christianity, the Gnostics gave loose to the ardour of an Oriental fancy, indulged in a variety of Theosophistic speculations, and with their systems of Divine Emanations, Eradiations, Incarnations, and Persons, formed an almost mythological concatenation of ideas; so that had it been possible for this sect to become predominant, and for Christianity to swerve into such a labyrinth of doctrines, our divine religion would have degenerated into a system of metaphysical fictions, not unlike the philosophic mythology and poetical creed of India. Happily these sects of Gnostics were not numerous, nor in general of long duration; and they were extremely divided among themselves; for a truly inventive fancy ever strikes out a path of enquiry for itself. But, when considered in an intellectual point of view, these sectaries, amid

all their strange and whimsical errors, must ever command the attention of mankind. It would seem from all appearance, (and indeed the nature of things would sufficiently warrant the inference) that many of these sects combined with their own peculiar notions, the opinions of other oriental sects, totally alien from Christianity. As the march of error is infinitely progressive, and as, from its very nature, false opinion is sure to branch out into a variety of ramifications, it is often difficult to determine with exactness whether some of these Gnostic sects, that spread through Central Asia, and were lost in a multitude of others, were or not of a Christian origin. Of all the sects belonging to the Gnostic family, the Manichæans alone appear to have had a longer existence; and during the middle ages, they secretly germinated in Europe.

The second corruption of Christianity was from Arianism, which corresponds to what in modern times is termed Rationalism; though the former appeared in another and more Christian form. That the dispute with Arianism was no mere verbal dispute—that it involved a capital article of faith—a question of life or death for Christianity—a question whether the real Foundation — the essential Corner-stone — and Beginning of our faith were really, truly, and in very deed divine, and from God, and equal with God, or merely in a certain sense like to God—(an opinion which the Platonic, or any other

system of philosophy might have included among its tenets)—that the dispute with Arianism was no mere verbal dispute, must be evident to every upright, ingenuous, and unprejudiced mind. No sect has ever been so widely diffused, nor has ever taken such deep root; and, by the arts and evasions of a prodigious subitlty, it maintained its principles under the mask of apparent submission. It was now that for the first time, the importance and power of a general council became apparent, in order to oppose to the many-shaped, subtle, and intangible spirit of error, a brief, but clear, and definite formulary of that faith which animated the bosom, and was rooted in the conviction, of every Christian. This destructive rationalism of the early ages of Christianity was at last repressed, and became finally extinct; though the last ramifications of this sect have continued down to our times among the Eutychians of Armenia, and the Nestorians of Ethiopia.

How much the unhappy disputes of Arianism contributed in this period of general decline, towards the downfal of the Roman Empire, I have already had occasion to notice. But that passion for dispute, which, if not innate in man, has at least become his second nature, and is, as it were, the original sin of human intellect, displays itself in a more striking degree in certain sects, that did not question any article of faith, but merely some subordinate matters of opinion, or the rights of ecclesiastical authority, and who

conducted their disputes with the most unyielding obstinacy—such a passion, I say, displays itself more strikingly in these sects than in others, that called in question points of faith, and who, so far as they were conscientious in their errors, appear entitled to our respect and forbearance. Among the former class of disputants, must be ranked some of the smaller, less diffused, and obscurer sects of the first ages of the church, like the Montanists and Donatists;—sects, whose influence was on that account by no means unimportant, and who occupy no insignificant place in the history of their times; for their errors constitute the third form of deviation from universal Christianity. In the same category must we place the great schism of a later period, which severed the Greek from the Western church; for this unhappy separation, as is well known, had no relation to any important dogma of Christianity.

As the general councils of that period prove the self-preserving and self-sustaining power of Christianity, so the energy of Christian faith and Christian intellect displays its life, activity and scientific progress in the numberless and manifold productions of those first doctors of the church, so highly revered by all succeeding ages. The style and language of these works must be estimated by the standard of their age; and it would be absurd to expect them to possess, in a like degree, the attic simplicity of a Xenophon, or the full and elaborate periods of a Livy.

But with this single exception, these writings display the most varied talents for oratory and philosophy, united with extensive learning, the purest feelings of religious love, and the most correct views in religion. And, to cite but one or two examples out of the multitude of ecclesiastical writers, St. Augustine, by the extent of his historical information, by a philosophy zealous in its enquiries after truth, but still irresolute, presents the image of a Christian Cicero, in a language somewhat altered indeed, but distinguished for a similar employment of rhetoric. Nor was this great man destitute of political discernment and penetration; and he certainly possessed a much more decided talent for speculative enquiry, than the old Roman who flourished in the last age of the Republic. There was next that learned and holy recluse, St. Jerome, who was as well versed in classical literature as in the oriental languages, and who was gifted with a depth of critical discernment, and an original power of thought and expression, equalled by very few orators and thinkers in any age.

The dread of a false Gnosis was at that period, as often in subsequent ages, an obstacle to the progress of a profound Christian philosophy. The leaning of the great ecclesiastical writer, Origen, particularly in his youth, to some opinions of the Gnostics, excited long after his death many doubts and controversies respecting some points of his belief, and tended at least to

impair the reverence with which his philosophical genius was otherwise regarded. This was particularly the case when the Arians made use of some doubtful opinions of this great man for the support of their system; as indeed it often happens that an elevated system of philosophy if not completed in its parts, or at least that the individual errors it may contain are seized upon by the dull, innovating spirit of a superficial, and half-doubting faith, and debased to a quite alien and inferior sphere of speculation.

There is also another error, or rather illusion, which deserves to be noticed, as it is a characteristic incident in the history of those early ages of the church; for it was no regular system of error, nor did its partisans constitute a sect; but it was merely the exaggerated opinion of some individuals in the bosom of the church, who were animated by no intentions hostile to Christianity. I allude to the (so called) Millenarian doctrine, which, as it refers to the future historical destiny of Christianity, possesses a high historical interest. Though the Prophet of the New Testament marked out the period of a thousand years for the duration of the triumph of the church, he expressly intimated thereby that that period could not be discovered nor determined by human penetration, for, as the scripture saith, "a thousand years are as one day with the Lord, and one day as a thousand years;" and though the inspired writer expressly added, that as the great

combat, which man is doomed to on the earth and in earthly life, can never be completely terminated, a last combat awaited humanity at the close of those thousand years; many virtuous and praiseworthy men were still found, who depicted this kingdom of a thousand years in the most sensual colours of earthly felicity, and thus destroyed all faith in that prophetic warning, so necessary for man and for all ages—all belief in the ideal conception of the kingdom of divine truth: or, with reckless precipitancy equally misapplied the words of the prophet, and (as has often been the case in succeeding times) very unseasonably alarmed themselves and others; though that long series of ages marked out by the Apostle for the progress of Christianity might have opened their eyes, and taught them differently. But the principal cause which opposed, and must ever oppose an insurmountable difficulty to the Millenarian system of that and of all succeeding ages, is the limit assigned to the judgment of Christians in all that relates to the inscrutable decrees of Divine Providence; whether those decrees regard individuals or mankind in general. Surely nothing could be conceived more disquieting, more fatal to human life, than for every individual to know beforehand with the utmost certainty from his birth the day and hour of his death; and no greater calamity could happen to any man than a revelation of such a kind. The same remark is equally applicable to the world in general, where

such fore-knowledge would only produce the utmost disorder and confusion. As in the case of a sick man reduced to imminent danger from the increasing symptoms of dissolution; though no man, not even the physician, can positively know and determine with certainty the course of events, which is known to God alone, still every friend would wish that the patient should examine his interior, unite his thoughts to God, and set his house in order; so cases may be imagined, when this comparison would apply to mankind at large.

Thus then on the Roman soil, and amid that world once so brilliant, Christianity had grown up, like a tender, luminous plant, whose seed had come down from Heaven. For the further expansion of that heavenly seed, for the formation of the Christian state, and the political organization of Christian nations, we must allow that the all-wise and powerful Hand, which guides the destinies of men and of nations, the march of ages, and the course of events, found it necessary to employ at first very violent, and (if we may borrow a term of the medical art) almost *heroic* remedies. The cause of this undoubtedly must be sought for in the fact, that although many great and holy men are to be found in the first ages of the church, mankind on the whole had very imperfectly corresponded to that mighty and divine impulse which Christianity had imparted to the world; and had very soon and very quickly fallen into the most fearful dis-

putes. Scarce had that inundation of the Northern nations burst in upon the blooming garden of the Christian West, (and beneficial to mankind as have been the remote consequences and final results of that revolution, and defensible therefore as it may be in a historical Theodicea, still we cannot deny that its immediate effects were most terrible and destructive;)—scarce, we say, had this inundation of the Northern nations occurred, when, in the opposite quarter of the East, there broke out among the nations of Asia, that mighty Arabian conflagration, whose flames were scattered over the terrified globe, by the sons of the desert, guided by their new prophet of unbelief, and animated themselves with all the enthusiasm of destruction.

I am at a loss to conceive how some could have regarded it as a peculiar merit of this religion of empty arrogance and senseless pride, that it maintains and inculcates with purity a belief in one Almighty Deity. This, as the Scripture says, the demons themselves, in their realms of eternal darkness, believe, without being on that account at all the better; and it is only a profound ignorance of the world and himself that could ever make man forget and obliterate from his bosom that first foundation of all faith. All the elements of salvation, reconciliation, mercy, love, and happiness for mankind, to be found in eternal truth, and a belief in that truth; all these are wanting in the

religion of Mahomet. There is not a more decided contrast than that presented by the silent progress of the new and divine light of truth in the primitive church, amid oppression and persecution, in meek submission to every existing law, and, except in matters of faith, in a patient, unwearied, and cheerful submission to the hostile, but still legitimate, powers of the earth; and, on the other hand, that fanatic thirst of conquest inspired by Mahomet — that express precept to propagate by fire and sword throughout the four quarters of the globe the new *Unitarian* faith of Arabia. If some writers instead of studying the history of modern Europe, in order to deduce from their researches new matter and occasion for reviving the old contests about the respective rights and limits of the secular and ecclesiastical powers, would only examine with attention the history of the ancient Caliphate, they would soon satisfy themselves of the fearful character of that Institution, of the infernal spirit that produced that anti-Christian combination of spiritual and temporal authority, and of the horrible state of moral degradation to which it has reduced mankind in every country where it has prevailed.

It was with the rapidity of a destructive fire that this mighty mischief spread over the countries of Asia, and a large portion of Africa, till it soon menaced the Southern extremities of Europe. When Mahomet died, he was master of Arabia, a country that from the earliest anti-

quity had remained in a state of absolute seclusion from the rest of the world; and consequently if this great revolution had remained confined within the limits of this region, the religion of Mahomet would never have exerted so mighty an historical influence on other nations and kingdoms. But only a few score years from his decease, and under his immediate successors, the whole Western Asia between the Tigris and Euphrates, as far as the Mediterranean, Syria, and Palestine, down to Mount Taurus and the frontiers of Asia Minor, and soon again the whole Northern coast of Africa, down to the opposite shores of Spain, were subdued by the disciples of the Koran; while at the same moment the Roman West and the Empire of Persia were menaced by the arms of these formidable invaders. It was a general principle with the Mahometan conquerors to extirpate all recollection of antiquity in the countries which they subdued, to give them an entirely new form and aspect—or, in other words, to destroy and obliterate every vestige of the higher and better civilization that had adorned those once flourishing regions.

END OF LECTURE XI.

LECTURE XII.

Sketch of Mahomet and his religion.—Establishment of the Saracenic Empire. — New organization of the European West, and Restoration of the Christian Empire.

From the earliest period, the pastoral tribes of Arabia have lived under their Emirs, in all the wild independence of Nomade nations; they were not however without cities, as these were created and rendered necessary by the trade of the caravan, which in its journies through the wilderness, and in its passage from one inhabited province to another, required these points of rest. A few of the frontier-districts and maritime coasts were indeed possessed by some of the more ancient Egyptian Pharaohs; but the entire country was never subdued or conquered either by the Assyrians, the Persians, or the Macedonian conquerors. Nor were the Romans more successful; and it was only in the reign of Trajan, the last of Roman emperors, who meditated schemes of conquest, that a small fron-

tier tract of Arabia Petræa was taken possession of, and annexed to, the Roman Empire. Immediately on the death of Trajan, the Roman government recurred to the pacific policy of Augustus, who had considered it dangerous to enlarge the empire by any new conquests: and in consequence, this province of Arabia was abandoned by the Romans, and left to the enjoyment of its ancient freedom.

This long-established liberty and total independence on all foreign conquerors and rulers has not a little contributed to exalt among the Arabs a strong self-consciousness. Their origin, which is very nearly akin to that of the Hebrews, they deduce as descendants of Yoktan from *Heber*, who was an ancestor of Abraham, or from Ishmael, the son of Abraham, that was born in the desert. Among these free and warlike pastoral nations, the feelings of clanship, the pride of noble descent, and the glory of an ancient and renowned race, and again the mutual hostility of tribes transmitted from one generation to another, the never-to-be-cancelled debt of blood, form the ruling and animating principle, nay, the almost exclusive purport of existence. This *tribe-spirit* of the Arabians has had a mighty influence on the origin and first developement of the Mahometan religion, and has stamped on it a peculiar character. And among the Nomade nations in a similar stage of social advancement, and who combine the freedom of the pastoral life with

the commerce of caravans, and are not total strangers to the refinement of cities, the faith of Mahomet has not only obtained the easiest access, but has struck the deepest roots, and finds, as it were, its most natural disciples. For the Tartar nations in the interior parts of Asia, and the tribes of Berbers, who are the original inhabitants of the North of Africa, lead the same mode of life, though they cannot boast of the ancient origin and high descent ascribed to the Arabs. Compared with Roman degeneracy, with the corruption of the Byzantine court, with Assyrian effeminacy, and the immorality of the great Asiatic cities, this tribe-character of the Arabians, as preserved in its purity during their ancient freedom, appears undoubtedly to be of a less corrupt, more moral and more generous nature. Doubtless the Arabs possessed in the first ages of their history, a great moral energy of will and strength of character, and, even in the period of their decline, these qualities are still perceptible. On the other hand in this *tribe-character*, and in those feelings of clanship, which determine all the social relations among that people; pride, party-animosities, and the spirit of revenge, are the ruling elements of life, and the passions to which all things are made subservient, or are sacrificed. The moral corruption of the human race, the profound disorder of man's whole being, is proved as well by the constant proneness of civilized nations towards a soft voluptuousness of morals, or by the innate

disposition of politer classes and ages to a spirit of speculative contention, as by the rude pride and animosities of tribes, which considered in a natural point of view, appear to be purer and less corrupt in their morals, or to possess greater strength and generosity of character. Those tribe-feelings and passions of pride and hatred, anger and revenge, so prevalent among the Arabians, are displayed in their ancient poetry, and even constitute its essential spirit and purport; for except those parables, riddles, and proverbial sayings in which the Orientals so much delight, this poetry has no mythological fictions, like that of the Indians and the Greeks, nor with the exception of a certain enthusiasm of passion, does it evince any truly fertile and inventive power of imagination.

The old Arabians never possessed, like the Indians, Egyptians, and Greeks, a poetical, high-wrought, and scientifically arranged system of Polytheism. The historical traditions of their different races had much analogy with those of the Hebrews, and coincided with them in a variety of points; for as they were of the Semitic race, they deduced their origin from Abraham and the other holy Patriarchs of the primitive world. Hence the tradition of a purer faith, and the simple, patriarchal worship of the Deity, appear to have never been totally extinguished among the Arabs; though indeed the veracious Herodotus asserts, that they adored the Asyrian Venus under the name of

Alilath. But such a mixture of religious doctrines and practices is by no means incredible, when we reflect on those periods in the history of the Hebrews, when though that people were in possession of the Mosaic revelation and code of laws, and though their whole arrangment of life were founded thereon; though mighty and zealous prophets perpetually arose to warn them of their errors; they still went after Baal, and still sacrificed their children to Moloch. In the age of Mahomet, and shortly before his time, various kinds of idolatry had found their way among the Arabs from the neighbouring nations, who if not now, had formerly been plunged in the errors of Paganism. At the same time several Jewish tribes existed in Arabia, and even some Christian communities, belonging mostly to the Oriental sects, mingled with the rest of the population. The neighbouring Christian monarch, or Negus of Æthiopia, also exerted considerable influence on the different tribes and communities of Arabia.

Mahomet felt the most decided aversion to all Pagan idolatry, and even to all veneration of images; and it is very possible, according to the opinion of a great historian, who on the whole does not judge the Arabian prophet unfavourably, that the expectation which the Jews still entertained of the future coming of a Deliverer and Prophet, should have operated very powerfully on the mind and imagination of Mahomet. In the same way as the Jews, then

incomparably more active than afterwards, still expected *Him* who had long since come; so certain Christian sects, totally misunderstanding the Scriptures, which they interpreted according to their own arbitrary sense, believed that the Holy Ghost and the divine Paraclete whom the Saviour had promised, was yet to come; although the Saviour had promised that the Holy Spirit should come down upon his disciples, immediatly after his ascension, and had added, that the same spirit should for ever abide with them. Now every one who professed himself a Christian, knew very well from the Holy Scriptures, that a supernatural light had decended on the Apostles in the first assembly they held, and when, as they thought, their Lord and Master had abandoned them; and that this light had transformed the disciples, till then weak, wavering, and trembling before the world, into apostolic men filled with the spirit of God, into prophets of eternal truth and divine love, humble, but energetic, and no less heroic than enlightened. That Assister and Comforter, or that guiding Paraclete promised by God to his disciples, which in the Apostles had proved itself a spirit of knowledge, of illumination, and of insight into the mysteries of faith—in the martyrs, a spirit of divine power and of heroic constancy under sufferings, was now in the great doctors of the church, and in the general councils the guiding spirit of wisdom, rightly discerning and steadfastly adhering to the truths of

revelation. But this truth did not prevent many leaders of those sects from regarding themselves in their own conceit as the Comforter and the Paraclete promised by God for the consolation of succeeding ages, or even from permitting themselves to be so considered by their own disciples. The supposition of the great historian just now cited, that these Judæo-Christian expectations of the future coming of an earthly Deliverer, Redeemer and Teacher, or Prophet of the world, may have exerted no inconsiderable influence on the mind of Mahomet, and may have awakened similar conceptions and imaginations in his own head, is confirmed by the fact, that the Koran itself contains no very obscure allusions and references to the notion of the Paraclete, and to a supernatural and divine power and force under the very denomination used among the later Hebrews, and according to the very word sanctioned for that peculiar object.

In the time of Mahomet, and shortly before him, the Caaba at Mecca constituted the great sanctuary of Arabian worship. This, if we may so designate it, was a simple chapel of Pagan pilgrimage, which contained the black stone, the object of the religious devotion of the Arabs from a very ancient period. The idolatrous worship of such shapeless or conical blocks of stone was by no means unknown to the wayward genius of ancient Polytheism. We meet with a similar form of idolatry in the mythology

of the Greeks, though set off and embellished by the peculiar fancy of that people; and instances of a like kind were to be found in the worship which the neighbouring people of Syria paid to Belus or Baal. Those stones which are frequently mentioned by ancient historians as having fallen from Heaven, may probably have given rise to this peculiar species of idolatry; and the fact itself (as now indeed is often the case with the general traditions of antiquity) is sufficently proved by the existence of those well-known meteor-stones, whose origin, though they have undergone chemical analysis, and mineralogical investigation, still remains, even in the present advanced state of modern science, a problem of no small difficulty.

The Arabian tribe from which Mahomet was sprung, had long been intrusted with the care and custody of the Caaba and the black stone, and placed its highest glory in this its allotted dignity. According to the Arabian tradition, Abraham had first erected the Caaba, and the Amalecites had afterwards repaired it. When the tribe of Koreish, who were invested with this high charge, had to rebuild this temple; they were at a loss to know how the sacred black stone should be fixed in the walls, and what hand should touch the consecrated piece, when quite unexpectedly, this honour fell to the lot of Mahomet, then a stripling of fifteen. For this reason we may well suppose that this ancient seat of Arabian worship—the Caaba—produced

one of those youthful impressions that determined the future destiny of this extraordinary man. Even in the religious system which he afterwards founded, this ancient sanctuary with its magical stone, has remained in every age a high object of veneration; and it is only in our times that the temple of Mecca has been exposed to the rage of the *Wechabites*, who though their religious fury has taken an opposite course, exhibit the old Arabian character in all its fanatical violence. But this old black stone-idol is a very remarkable feature in the history of Mahomet and of his religion. In the holy temple of the Caaba were kept and suspended the seven most remarkable poems which had won the prize over the other tribe-songs of the Arabs, —a species of poetry peculiar to this people, and breathing all the enthusiasm of pride and hatred. In these compositions, Mahomet held a very distinguished rank, and long before he announced himself as a prophet, his poetry, which far outshone that of his competitors, had raised him to a high degree of honour and consideration. It was only in the fortieth or forty-second year of his age, and after a long and solitary abode in a cavern during what the Mahometans term, "the night of divine decrees," that Mahomet formed the first determination, and thought he felt the first inward calling to the mission of a prophet. The first person that believed in this mission, and acknowledged him for a prophet, was his own wife Cadijah, who, though a rich widow, had

bestowed her hand on Mahomet, when his solè patrimony consisted of five camels and an Ethiopian maid-servant, and had thus raised him to a station of wealth and independence. It is worthy of notice, that it is only in the epileptic fits to which he was subject, that he is represented as having mysterious colloquies with the angel Gabriel. Others represent him as a lunatic; and in connection with this charge I may mention the story, that he wished to pass with his disciples as a person transfigured in a supernatural light, and that the credulity of his followers saw the moon, or the moon's light descend upon him, pierce his garments, and replenish him. That veneration for the moon, which still forms a national or rather religious characteristic of the Mahometans, may perhaps have its foundation in the elder superstition, or Pagan idolatry of the Arabs.

Modern historians have often complained of the difficulty of ascertaining the precise truth in the history of Mahomet, from the severity of his opponents on the one hand, and the enthusiastic admiration of his Eastern partisans, on the other. If we think proper to follow those writers only, who by their acquaintaince with the language have copied from Arabic authorities, we shall find that their narratives are much distorted by fanaticism, and rendered almost unintelligible by an absurd exaggeration. Independently of the evident traces in this religion of a demoniacal influence and operation; undoubted historical

facts will furnish us with sufficient data for forming a clear and definitive opinion on the character of Mahomet and the nature of his religion. Although the Arabs of that age, like other nations of that time, and the ancient Hebrews, universally thought that supernatural works were to be expected from a prophet; and that the high power of miracles was necessary to prove a divine mission; yet Mahomet found it more fitting or convenient to declare, that he could dispense with the aid of miracles, as he came not to found a new religion, but to restore the purity of the old—the faith of Abraham, and the other Patriarchs. Even though we had not such clear and positive historical proofs and testimonies, respecting the nature of that presentient faith of Abraham, and the other Patriarchs of the Old Testament—a faith which pointed to all the mysteries of futurity—still to suppose that the religion of those pious Fathers of hoar antiquity, were nothing more than that system of (so called) pure, but in reality shallow, and meaningless, Theism, which the pretended Arabian Reformer has announced to the world, would be little consonant with probability, and little conformable to the nature and march of the human mind. Considered in its true internal spirit, and divested of its outward garb of oriental customs and symbolical language, the religion of Mahomet on a closer investigation will be found rather to bear a stronger affinity to the inane and superficial philosophy of the

eighteenth century; and if that philosophy were honest and consistent, it would not hesitate loudly to proclaim and openly to revere Mahomet, if not as a prophet, still as a real Reformer of mankind, the first promulgator and mighty teacher of truth, and the founder of the pure religion of reason.

Such a dead empty Theism, such a mere negative Unitarian faith, is little adapted for the true purposes of a religion, though it may form the basis of some scholastic system of Rationalist Theology. Regarded as a religious system, the creed of Mahomet is neither old nor new; but is in part perfectly void and meaningless, and in part composed of very mixed materials. The part in it which is new, is that fanatic spirit of conquest it has inculcated and diffused through the world; and that part in it which is old, is copied from the Hebrew traditions and the Christian revelation, or contains allusions to the one or to the other, including some old Arabian customs and usages which this religion has still retained.

In the first infancy of the Mahometan faith, and during the first disputes and wars which occurred about that religion, a number of Mahomet's followers were obliged to seek refuge in Æthiopia, when the Christian monarch of that country asked them whether they were Christians. They cited in reply several passages from the sayings and poems of their prophet, relating to the Saviour, to his birth, and to the

Virgin Mary. In these the Prophet spoke of the birth and origin of our Saviour, as of a Gnostic eradiation or emanation of divine power; and though such language was by no means consonant with the Christian doctrine of the divinity of Christ, yet it was calculated to produce on the minds of some of the Eastern sectaries a very false and deceitful impression. Favourable to Christianity as some of these expressions might at first sight appear to the ignorant; there was much again that betrayed a spirit of the most decided hostility towards the Christian religion. Even the prohibition of wine was perhaps not so much intended for a moral precept, which, considered in that point of view, would be far too severe, as for answering a religious design of the founder; for he might hope that the express condemnation of a liquid which forms an essential element of the Christian sacrifice, would necessarily recoil on that sacrifice itself, and thus raise an insuperable barrier between his creed, and the religion of Christ. The peculiar spirit and true character of any religious system, must be judged not so much by the letter of its professed doctrines, as by its practice and prevailing usages. And thus that established custom is extremely remarkable, which makes it imperative on every Jew, who may wish to become a Mahometan, previously to receive the rite of baptism. Thus did Mahomet think to stand upon the basis of Christianity; and while addressing the Arabs, he ap-

pealed solely to the religion of their first ancestor, and of the other Patriarchs, he assigned in his graduated scale of revelation, the first degree to Judaism, the second to Christianity, and the third and highest to his own Islam. That he was a mere fanatic, and entirely devoid of all ambitious or political views, I cannot admit; and although he himself had even been more unconscious of a deliberate hostility towards the mysteries of the true religion, *another* may have inspired him with that subtle design.

Such then was this new, or as the founder himself styled it, this pure old doctrine of all-conquering Islam and of all-surpassing faith, which this pretended restorer of the religion of Abraham—this false Paraclete of misconceived promise and idle phantasy, brought and announced to the world :—*a prophet without miracles—a faith without mysteries—and a morality without love*, which has encouraged the thirst of blood, and which began and terminated in the most unbounded sensuality. Supposing even, that one of the leading points in this system of morals, the re-establishment of polygamy to such a wide extent, and at a period of the world when this institution was formally abolished among many nations, and among others had fallen into disuse, could be in some measure excused by the customs of Asia, the wants of climate, and the general prejudices of the nation, or other like cause;—what must we think of a code of morals professing to be divine,

which in opposition to the Christian doctrine of the pure happiness enjoyed by the celestial spirits in the intuition of God, and to which man must even in this life, aspire by vigilant preparation, if he wishes to render himself worthy of that state—can form no other ideal of supreme felicity—can devise no other expedient to fill up the immense void which this religion has left in the supernatural world, than a boundless Harem—a paradise of lust, portrayed in the most glowing colours of sensuality!

That part of the Mussulman morality relating to our fellow-beings, the precept of alms-deeds which it prescribes, is the only part entitled to praise, which we willingly accord; and we sincerely trust, that not merely the commandment, but the custom and practice of charity among Christians may never prove inferior. But in every other respect, this religion permits not only hatred and vengeance, in opposition to that Christian precept so repeatedly inculcated, and so deeply engraven on our minds—the pardon of our enemies; but it encourages, and even commands irreconcileable hostility, eternal warfare, eternal slaughter, to propagate thoughout the world a belief in this blood-stained prophet of pride and lust. Perhaps all the Heathen nations put together, in the long series of ages, have not offered to their false gods so many human victims, as in this new Arabian idolatry have been sacrificed to this highly extolled, anti-Christian prophet. For the essence of ido-

latry is not in names or in words, in rites or in sacrifices; but in the nature of things, in the actual transactions of life, in unchristian customs, and anti-christian sentiments; and there is even that old black stone-idol, of which I said before in a figurative sense, that it has ever remained firmly fixed in the religion of Mahomet. The commencement of this religion was not marked by any contest about mysteries of faith, or points of doctrine; but by combats of another kind more congenial to the spirit of the Arabs, by a war which broke out between the party of Mahomet, and the hostile tribe which refused to acknowledge him for a prophet, and whose refusal occasioned his flight from Mecca. In this contest he drew the sword, fought courageously against the unbelievers, and by overpowering by force of arms all who refused to recognize him as a prophet, thought to prove his divine mission. He met however with much resistance, and had many factions to overcome, before he succeeded in subduing the various tribes of his nation. This contest lasted for ten years, up to the very moment of his death, when he died master of all Arabia. Shortly before that event, he wrote very insolent letters to the Emperor Heraclius, and to the great king of Persia, summoning them to acknowledge him for a Prophet, and to believe in his mission. Both gave rather evasive replies, than positive refusals; —so great was the terror which this new power of Hell had already struck into the world.

Immediately on the death of Mahomet, a great contest arose among his disciples. On one side Ali, his son-in-law, by marriage with his daughter Fatima, and on the other Abubeker, his father-in-law, whose daughter Ayesha was the surviving widow of the Prophet, and who was afterwards succeeded by Omar, contended with all the might of their respective adherents for superiority and dominion; and this bloody family-quarrel, which distracted the very infancy of the Arabian Empire, has produced among Mahometan nations a long and protracted religious schism, which has continued down to the present day. This was originally a mere personal dispute, and not a dogmatic controversy as among Christian sects; for the religion of Mahomet furnishes no matter for such controversies, as in reality it contains little of a doctrinal nature, and recognizes no dogmas but the two contained in the seven Arabic words of the well-known symbol of Islam:—"There is no God but God, and Mahomet is the Apostle of God." The one of these is a declaration of the self-evident tenet of the unity of God, but levelled indirectly against the Christian dogma of the Trinity; while the other expresses the divine mission of Mahomet, and by calling forth a veneration that leads to the contempt and rejection of all things besides, has in a practical point of view, really established a new species of idolatry. Abubeker and Omar asserted that they alone were the

legitimate Caliphs and successors of Mahomet; and as the Partisans of Ali rejected the supplement founded on oral tradition, to the poems and maxims of the Prophet, they were stigmatized as schismatics by the opposite party. In Persia, the sect of Ali has remained predominant down to the present day; and as in that country, the ancient traditions and old national poetry have been partly preserved, and have been combined in a very peculiar manner with the tenets of Mahometanism, many bolder, freer, and less contracted notions have found their way among this people. Hence it is very possible that on a closer investigation, we could discover a great difference in the intellectual character of these two sects, not so much perhaps in religious doctrines, about which there is here little room for enquiry, as in moral feelings and views of life.

The progress of the Arabian conquests was not checked by these internal disputes. Five years after the death of Mahomet, and fifteen from the commencement of the Hegira, the city of Jerusalem was conquered by the arms of the Arabs; and in the eighteenth year of the same era, Egypt became a Mussulman province. The thirtieth year of the Hegira was not yet terminated, before the whole Empire of Persia was subdued, and its last monarch of the race of the Sassanides, Yezdegerd had perished in foreign parts, a suppliant and a fugitive. In the fiftieth year of the Hegira, Arabian vessels menaced

and beseiged Constantinople, which was indebted for its deliverance chiefly to the use of the Greek fire. In the ninetieth year of the same era, while on one side the Arabs extended their victorious arms over India, they subverted on the other the Visigoth kingdom in Spain and Portugal, and became masters of the whole Hesperian Peninsula, as far as those inaccessible mountains, in whose fastnesses a fugitive remnant of the ruling Goths, and of the old inhabitants of the country had intrenched themselves, thence to carry on that struggle for freedom, which till the final conquest of Granada, and the complete expulsion of the Moors from Spain, lasted for a period of eight hundred years. After the downfal of the first dynasty of Caliphs of the house of Ommiyah, and the subsequent accession of the Abbassides to the empire, a separate and independent Caliphate was established in Mussulman Spain, and lasted there for several ages. The Arabs had scarce achieved the conquest of Spain, when they aspired to the possession of the Visi-Goth and Burgundian provinces of France. But a term was at last put to the progress of their arms, by the mighty victory which the Frank hero, Charles Martel, gained between Tours and Poitiers, over their General Abderame, who fell on the field with the flower of his troops, in the twentieth year after the conquest of Spain, and in the hundred and tenth year of the Hegira. Thus did the arm of Charles Martel save and deliver

the Christian nations of the West, from the deadly grasp of all-destroying Islam. In Asia the universal dominion of the Arabs was more and more firmly consolidated, and the second of the Abbassides, Almansor, erected the city of Bagdad, or the new Babylon, not far from the country where the old was situated, and which was thenceforth the vast metropolis of an immense empire.*

The new religion and conquests of the Arabs may be considered in the light of a new migration of nations, as no inconsiderable portion of the Moorish population passed into Spain; and this Arabian migration has exerted in Asia and

* It may not perhaps be uninteresting to the reader to compare with Schlegel's account of Mohammedanism, an admirable, though briefer sketch of the same religion by the hand of another great master—the illustrious Goerres. In the Synopsis which he has published of the Lectures on Universal History, that he has been for several years delivering at Munich, we find the following remarkable passage on the Mohammedan religion. The author after speaking of the various trials which the Christian church had to endure, says "Hence the young church must wrestle with all the forms of error in the Gnostic doctrines and in the other heresies; one after the other she remains the triumphant conqueress over all, and maintains against every attack her well-balanced equilibrium. At length, when the contest has raged for centuries, the enemy combines in one focus all the scattered rays of error; and the Prophet of Mecca knows how to balance himself therein. The *rigid Monotheism* of his doctrine, which by denying the Trinity, and with it all personal manifestation of the Deity, limits its idea to the depths of Eternity, without admitting any true or living communication of the God-head with what appertains to time, naturally allures the metaphysical pride which in this abstraction hath made itself its

in Africa, a far more extensive influence on empire, language, manners, political institutions, and intellectual cultivation, than the invasion of the Germanic tribes has exercised in Europe. When we compare the immigrations of the Germanic tribes with those of the Arabs, and consider the violence which characterized the latter, the pernicious influence they have exerted on the human mind, and on civilization, and the despotism they have invariably introduced into political and domestic society, we may look upon the migrating tribes of Germany, almost as Colonies, which though originally they partook of a warlike character, yet inclined more and more

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own God. The *ethical Pantheism* which this religion professes, while it furnishes a pretext, a motive and a palliation to all the pretensions of the mighty, to the ambition of usurpers, the violence of pride, and the arrogance of tyranny, and at the same time consoles and disarms the injured and the oppressed, by the inevitableness of destiny, must draw to its preacher the men of the sword, of violence, and of blood, and link those once bound indissolubly to him. The *sensual Eudaimonism*, to which his creed opens so free a scope both in this world and the next, must rally round the apostle of lust, the multitude that burns with all the passionate glow of that fervid zone, and place under his controul all the wild fiery energies of that region. And thus do the cold doctrine, the cutting steel, and the destroying flame go before him as his missionaries; and the South and the East, and soon even a part of the European West, are bowed under the yoke of his religion: and while in the Caliphate he founds for it a new spiritual and secular empire, the modern world between Christianity and Mohammedanism becomes divided into night and day." — Goerres Uber die Grundlage der Weltgeschicte, page 99-100. *Breslaw*, 1830.—*Trans.*

to a peaceful nature, and ultimately assumed that spirit, when the tumult of intermediate anarchy had subsided, and Christianity had more intimately blended and finally incorporated the new settlers and the old inhabitants.

As the divine author of Christianity had promised his disciples, that the high power of God should ever abide with them, should guide and defend them; and that the assisting and counselling Spirit of truth, of peaceful order, and of active zeal should never be removed from them; the efficay of this divine promise was now manifested during this intermediate period of anarchy; and though in a different form from what it appeared in the earlier ages of the church, yet was it perfectly adapted to the exigencies of the time. The great problem of the age was first in this new agglomeration of nations, to endeavour to allay the agitated elements of society, till after that agitation had subsided, they should grow and strengthen into organic life and form; and next, to preserve the heritage of European science and letters, and thus sow the seeds of a richer and more flourishing harvest for future ages. And to effect this by the mild and genial influence of Christianity, was the object, the task, and the work of the distinguished ecclesiastics, bishops, dignitaries, and other apostolic men of those ages. The two great popes, Leo and Gregory, shone conspicuous above all their contemporaries, and were in that period of anarchy, a pillar of strength

and a shield of safety to afflicted Rome and Italy—the guardians of European society and of Christian science. Both by their practical and instructive writings, are considered as the last of the ancient fathers; and Leo even is remarkable for great purity of diction and force of eloquence. In point of science and learning, the succeeding bishops and dignitaries of the church cannot indeed be compared with the ancient fathers; but on the other hand, they united with a true Christian piety a practical sense that never failed to discern everywhere what was fitting for the emergency of the moment. The Monastic schools founded by St. Benedict were indeed of a very different nature from the primitive eremitical institutes of Egypt; and entirely adapted to the exigencies of Europe in that age, they were the asylums and seminaries of learning and philosophic contemplation; and while they promoted the interests of education, they were equally conducive to the progress of agriculture. A number of works have sufficiently shewn how much the influence of the Benedictine order, which for many centuries extended over all the countries of the West, has advanced the intellectual civilization of modern Europe, and indeed sown its first seeds.

By Bishop Boniface the Christian religion was established and widely diffused in the interior of Germany. At an earlier period, other holy men animated with an apostolic zeal, forty of whom were sent by Pope Gregory the Great,

carried the light of the gospel into Britain; where it was received with peculiar avidity by the Picts and Scots, and the old inhabitants of Erin, as well as by the Anglo-Saxons. In true Christian piety, and in such knowledge and science as the age possessed, England during this Saxon period, prior and down to the reign of Alfred, maintained nearly a pre-eminence above the other kingdoms of the West. Even that apostle of the Germans, Boniface, originally named Winfried, came from England; and among the writers of the age, Alcuin asserted the intellectual superiority of the Anglo-Saxon Christians. Limited as was the knowledge of the Western world in those ages, and narrow the circle of European science and learning, still we find in those times, but almost only in the West, writers of very original powers, and peculiar turn of mind, whose writings, composed either in a barbarous latin, or in a half-formed Romanic vernacular tongue, are the faithful and instructive mirrors of the spirit of the times. On the other hand, the later Byzantine writers, though they possessed incomparably greater resources, and much more extensive philological acquirements, have produced nothing but learned compilations.

Now there arose in the West, Christian kings, heroes and legislators, both among the Franks and the Saxons, such as Charlemagne and Alfred, who as men were not indeed faultless, but who should be judged and appreciated

36473

according to the character of their times; a knowledge of which is necessary for rightly understanding the spirit of these extraordinary men. In peace and in war they endeavoured firmly to establish and new model society on Christian principles and maxims; and they restored the Western in the form of a great Christian Empire, destined to defend and protect all Christian states—all the civilized nations of the European Confederacy against Barbarian invasion and internal anarchy.

If we compare these Frank and Saxon Kings and Emperors, valiant and chivalrous as they were, thirsting for glory, yet seeking and establishing peace, honouring justice, and founding or restoring laws, on one hand with those Saracen rulers and caliphs, ever burning with a rage for conquest and destruction, and on the other hand, with that Byzantine court, presenting almost always the uniform picture of corruption, and ruling over an empire piring in hopeless decay—if we contrast those flashes of genius which distinguished the writings of the Western nations, with the dead, spiritless monotony pervading all the productions of the Byzantine intellect, superior as the Greeks were to the rest of Europe in erudition, science and literary stores; we shall find in this comparison, (taking into consideration the imperfection of all human things, and actions, and persons, for even in this period of the world, errors and defects are to be found in the conduct of individuals mixed

up with the most praiseworthy qualities,) we shall find, I say, in this comparison, the best vindication and the highest eulogium of the Catholic West and its earlier history. The misrepresentation of that history formerly so frequently made by the passion, the exaggerations, and the prejudices of party, has still an injurious influence, but is with us no longer in season; for the moment has arrived, when fixed in the right centre, we must now begin to take a more complete and comprehensive survey of the primitive world, and classical antiquity, next of the history of the middle age, and of modern times, down to the present day, and to that approaching futurity still in the crisis of its formation; and when we must judge them with more correctness in all their details, and understand them better by examining their relative position in the great plan of history, and estimate them all by the standard given to us by God, which is the only true one. Then we shall judge these particulars without predilection, and without aversion, "*sine odio et sine dilectione,*" which is somewhat more than that excellent and greatest of all ancient historians, who gave utterance to this saying, really accomplished, or was indeed in his time and with his principles capable of accomplishing. For it is only the knowledge and complete comprehension of the great scheme of history, which can enable us to rise above the particular transactions of our own, or of a foreign nation, of the present times or of past ages; and

it is this knowledge which can alone clearly and safely determine the feeling with which we should regard particular historical facts. But for that end, the ancient historian, as well as all antiquity, wanted the clue which Christianity alone has given us, to the internal connexion of the world's history, and which they who seek for it elsewhere but in this religion, will certainly seek in vain.

In this period of anarchy, and during the sway of the Lombards, the circumstances of the times gave to the Popes a paramount authority in the internal administration of the city and district of Rome; as well as a general political influence over all Italy; — an influence which was for the most part very salutary, and tended effectually to ensure the public peace and prosperity. I must here observe that this political position and power of the Popes, so naturally adapted to the circumstances of the times, and to the general situation of the Western world, was first put in a clear and correct point of view by writers not belonging to the Catholic church. For the political historians on the Catholic side have, in almost every country, retained too lively a recollection of the warm disputes as to the respective limits and rights of the ecclesiastical and secular power, not to be swayed by such feelings in their conception and accounts of an age long gone by; and this has certainly weakened the impartiality becoming the tribunal of history.

After the subversion of the Ostro-Goth dominion in Italy, the disgrace or even dissatisfaction of the Byzantine General, Narses, provoked the incursion of the Lombards into Italy. This people were not so exclusively devoted to the Arian party, as a portion of them, and several among their kings, professed the Catholic religion; but they were far from possessing the mild, generous character of the Goths, and their sway often proved oppressive in Italy. Yet every thing appeared more desirable and more tolerable in the opinion of many otherwise unprejudiced historians, than the impending danger of Byzantine rule. When in the middle of the seventh century, the Greek Emperor Constans II. waged war in Italy against the Lombards, and in the course of the war conquered Rome, the plunder, especially of the treasures of ancient art, was so immense, that compared with these Greek devastations, all the earlier and destructive ravages of the Goths appeared to be nothing. The ships which were conveying to Constantinople all these plundered treasures of art, fell into the hands of the Arabs, and were destroyed, so that it was never known what became of their valuable freight. So true it is, that Rome perished solely and entirely by her own hand, by internal discord, and the weight of her own corruption, and not by the hands of Germans or of Goths.

When at the commencement of the eighth century, the dominion of the rude Lombards

became oppressive, and the Greek sway under the Iconoclast Leo was still more detested, and all the cities and provinces of Italy had revolted against it; Pope Gregory II. without any previous concert, and by unanimous consent, was placed at the head of the Italian league, and declared its chief; but he warned his countrymen against the dangers of precipitation, exhorted them to the maintenance of peace, and ever cherished the hope of obtaining a friendly reconciliation with the Byzantine Emperor. The rigid prohibition of the religious use of images was proper in those cases only, where the use of them was not confined to a mere devotional respect, but was likely to degenerate into a real adoration and idolatry, and where a strict separation from Pagan nations and their rites was a matter of primary importance, as was the case in the Jewish dispensation of old. But now that the Mahomedan proscription, and scornful rejection of all holy emblems and images of devotion, arose from a decidedly anti-christian spirit, that displayed itself either in open violence or secret machination against the Christian religion; this Byzantine attack on images, and this furious war against all symbols of piety, which in its ulterior consequences might and must have proceeded to much greater lengths, can be regarded only as a mad contagion of the moral disease of the age. This disorder and phrenzy indeed subsided; and the Greeks of the Byzantine Empire in their reli-

gious rites, as well as dogmas, have remained Christians, and faithful to the old Christian traditions. Yet this controversy on the use of images, and the animosites and jealousies which it enkindled between the Christians of the East and West, did not a little contribute to that perfectly groundless, irrational, and unhappy schism which has severed the Greeks from the universal church.

The protracted contest between the kings of Lombardy and the Greek Exarchs of Ravenna, (during whose disputes the Popes felt the calling and inclination, but had not the power, to exercise the high functions of Protectors to oppressed Italy,) naturally provoked the arbitration of the Franks, led to the establishment of their Protectorate over Italy, and was thus the first occasion of the restoration of the Western Empire, and of the foundation of the great Christian imperial monarchy. The sublime idea of such an empire sprang solely and entirely out of circumstances and events, as they arose, and had not by any individual been fully anticipated, much less clearly understood. Hence we cannot attribute to any persons the blame or entire merit of events that really took place of themselves, by the mere force of circumstances, the spirit of the times, and the happy impulse of a lofty inspiration. Nor can we at this remote distance of time, and under circumstances so totally dissimilar, institute a formal discussion (in the manner of the Jurists) on the lawfulness or un-

lawfulness of any particular measure in this great series of public acts. No country besides was oppressed by so many and such contending rulers, as that Italy which had once bowed all nations beneath her yoke. Sicily, which had been conquered by the Arabs, laboured under the most cruel oppression; and it was the tyrannical conduct of the Greek governors that had paved the way for the conquest of that island. In the third century, the Franks had already migrated into Gaul; their rulers were from the origin of their empire most devoted to Christianity; and had besides in their conduct towards kindred or neighbouring nations, evinced a more judicious, prudent, and systematic policy, than had been shewn by any other Germanic or Gothic tribe, in the invasion and subsequent government of the Roman provinces. This nation, which from its origin had ever been warmly attached to the Catholic church, which had subdued the Visi-Goth kingdom in Gaul, had become masters of the Burgundian provinces, while it perpetually strove to extend and consolidate its dominion in the interior of Germany; was now, after its splendid victory over the Saracens, and the general protection which this victory had ensured to all Christendom, called into Italy, less by the Pope and the Romans, than by the state of affairs, and the urgency of times and circumstances, there to terminate anarchy, and re-establish the ancient order of things, or one better adapted to the exigencies

of the age. The Empire of the Franks was henceforward the most powerful state in the West, and was indeed the great centre of the civilized world; as afterwards became, though on a higher and more extended scale, the great Christian Empire of the middle age in Germany and in Italy. Here we find that high clue in human history to which we should ever adhere —on one side, the luminous trace of the more immediate providence of God—and on the other, the gradual unfolding of the human mind, evinced in science as in language, in feelings as in modes of thinking—an intellectual developement, which though often concealed, and, as it were, buried beneath the agitated surface of external events, forms (together with the conduct of divine providence,) the real and essential matter and purport in the history and progress of human communities. In this respect, if we regard either of the then two great rival powers in the East, we shall find that neither the dead monotony of the Byzantine Empire, sinking ever lower in the scale of moral, political and intellectual degradation, nor the more hasty growth and the internal distraction of the Saracenic Empire, (presenting, as it does, in its long series of political catastrophes, military revolutions, and frequent changes of dynasty, the same tedious uniformity of despotism), will furnish much matter of interest or of moment to the philosophic historian. It is in this period of the world, the gradual organization of the Christian state, as

in a later age, the developement of Christian science, which chiefly commands our regard, naturally so curious after all that relates to the concerns and destinies of mankind, and fixes our attention exclusively, or more particularly, on that European West, where all now displayed a fuller life, and a more constant movement and activity.

The territorial partitions, and the various feuds and dissensions which occurred between the Frank kings, possess but little, or at best a subordinate interest, amid the great events of the times—it is the leading idea of the age, the progressive march of society at this period, which offers matter of instruction to the historian. Many faults and errors, however, stained the first execution of this grand plan of a Christian Empire;—such for instance, were those wars which Charlemagne waged against the Saxons, as well as similar wars under his predecessors in the preceding age; for the propagation of the Christian religion by such means of coercion, can scarcely ever be excused, and in no case entirely justified. The best excuse is perhaps in the fact, that all wars between tribes nearly allied, are like family disputes, usually conducted with greater stubbornness and animosity. However, in the year 784, Charlemagne concluded with the Saxons a peace which was very advantageous to the latter; and the extremely prosperous and flourishing condition of the empire, and even of the countries in the North of Germany, under Henry the first

king of the Saxon race, proves at least that the evil was confined within very narrow limits, and had not been productive of such wide-spread and protracted desolation.

In the transition from the Carlovingian, to the Capetian dynasty, we should not forget that the monarchy was not strictly hereditary in any German state, but was for the most part merely elective; and it was only he, who had proved himself a valiant, prudent, and powerful defender of his nation, that became the man of the public choice. Royalty was then considered more in the light of an office, a charge, a peculiar calling, than of an inheritance or patrimony. The general idea of the Christian Empire, was a universal protectorate over all Christian nations and countries—a mighty central dominion founded on justice, while the great connecting and pervading power of the whole system was supposed to reside in the perfect unity of religious principles. When this religious unity was destroyed, the whole political edifice fell to pieces; and in the struggles of later times, the artificial relations founded on a mere mechanical balance of power, on a republican equality of states, without the foundation of Christian or any other solid principles, have furnished, as experience has shewn, but a very bad substitute for that old Christian brotherhood of the European states and nations; and have in the general subversion of Christian morality, produced a sort of polite disorder and refined anarchy.

In the partition of the Carlovingian Empire —a partition which was only in accordance with those principles of descent which regulated the inheritance of the great families—we can trace an almost heroic, and if we might use the expression, a naïve patriarchal confidence in the duration of that religious unity; for it was only on such a basis that men deemed it possible to combine the advantage of the domestic, internal government of a country limited in extent, with the controul of one general superintending monarchy. When a man of such consummate prudence, such long foresight, and powerful understanding as Charlemagne deemed such a scheme not impracticable, and thought it possible to maintain the political unity of his empire, under the joint dominion of his sons, and by their subordination to their eldest brother; we should learn not to judge the plan with too much precipitation, and according to the notions of our times, and our present systems of policy. This first partition which Charlemagne had designed, was prevented by the hand of death. The entire division of the whole Carlovingian Empire into three distinct portions, was first effected by Lewis the Pious; but the perpetual family dissensions which occurred under his successors, the weakness or violence of their characters, and the various factions which arose, rendered totally impossible the maintenance of that union, which was originally sought to be perpetuated in the empire, and led

to the final dismemberment and total dissolution of the old Empire of the Franks, when another dynasty succeeded to the imperial crown.

In the primitive monarchy of the Germans, however, the existence of the four great national dutchies, which were subordinate to the imperial crown, far more happily accomplished this union of a local, domestic, and paternal government with the controul of one powerful and superintending monarchy; so long at least as internal union subsisted, and discord had not obtained the supremacy. There then existed, though mostly in a different form than afterwards, a division of powers in the state as well as in the church; but unity in this division, or with this division, was sought for only in Christian and National sentiments; and as long as these subsisted in their integrity, the body politic remained unimpaired. At no time has a political constitution or mode of government been devised, which could permanently supply the place of principle.

In the national meetings of the great and smaller states of that age, in their assembled councils of dukes and princes, bishops, counts and lords, nobles and freemen (to whom were added the Commons of the cities, when by their rights and privileges they began to obtain importance), we must look for the first germ of all the succeeding parliaments and states-general of the European nations, and of the rights of the different orders of society, and the privileges and

corporate immunities of the cities. All these rights and liberties were purely local—they grew up on the root of national customs—they were founded on no speculative theory of universal equality, but on positive usage, and special laws. The union and stability of an empire was then sought for not in the balance of artificial forms, but in the holy heritage of ancient customs, in principle in short.

On this basis, first of Christian, then of national sentiments, do all Christian states repose; and when this foundation is destroyed, those states are undone. Ecclesiastical power had then a real and substantial weight, and a very extended circle of operation; although its limits and relations with secular authority were not so rigidly circumscribed as afterwards. To be sensible that this division of power will not necessarily impair the unity of strength and spirit in the social frame, as long as principle remains pure, and religious concord is preserved; we need only call to our recollection the fact, that all Christian states and kingdoms have sprung from this happy agreement between secular and ecclesiastical authority, and that this union was the sure foundation of their stability. And so long as both powers remained in harmonious accord, the times were prosperous, peace and justice ever increased, and the condition of nations was flourishing and happy. Christianity, says a great historian, who manifests a greater predilection for anti-

quity, and even for the oriental world, but whose comprehensive intellect often rightly appreciates the benign influence of this religion, which with us must have the priority; Christianity was the electric spark which first roused the warlike nations of the North, rendered them susceptible of a higher civilization, stamped the peculiar character, and founded the political institutions of modern nations, which have sprung out of such heterogeneous elements. And we may add, Christianity was the connecting power which linked together the great community of European nations; not only in the moral and political relations of life, but in science and modes of thinking. The church was like the all-embracing vault of heaven, beneath whose kindly shelter, those warlike nations began to settle in peace, and gradually to frame their laws and institutions. Even the office of instruction, the heritage of ancient knowledge, the promotion of science, and of all that tended to advance the progress of the human mind, devolved to the care of the church, and were exclusively confined to the Christian schools. If science was then of a very limited range, it was still quite proportioned to the exigencies and intellectual cultivation of the age; for mankind cannot transcend all the degrees of civilization by a single bound, but must mount slowly and in succession its various grades; and at any rate, science was not at that time unprofitably buried in libraries and in the closets of the learned, as

was afterwards the case in Europe, and even partly then among the Byzantines. The little knowledge which was then possessed, was by the more active spirit, and the sound understanding and practical sense of the European nations, and their better priesthood, applied with general advantage to the interests of society. Science was not then, as in the later period of its proud ascendancy, in open hostility with the pure dictates of faith and the institutions of life. On that world so variously excited in peace, as in war, and by the different pursuits of art and industry, useful knowledge and wholesome speculation descended, not like a violent flood, but like the soft distillations of the refreshing dew, or the gentle drops of fertilizing rain, from the Heaven of faith which overarched the whole.

END OF LECTURE XII.

LECTURE XIII.

On the formation and consolidation of the Christian Government in modern times.—On the principle which led to the establishment of the old German Empire.

The first three centuries of the Christian era and of modern history compose the epoch when, by a second fiat of creation, the light of Christianity spread through the whole Roman world, and when after undergoing long persecutions, the religion of Christ under Constantine came victorious out of the struggle. The second epoch or the succeeding five centuries comprehend that chaotic and intermediate state in the history of mankind, or the transition from declining antiquity to modern times, growing out of the ruins of the ancient world—the fermenting mixture of many and various elements of social life. But when at last the tempest had disburthened itself of its fury, the clouds had broken asunder, and the pure firmament of Christian

faith had stretched out its ample vault to shelter the rise of new communities; when the wild waters of that mighty inundation of nations had begun gradually to flow off; then the Germanic tribes incorporated with the Romanic nations, laid the deep firm soil on which modern European society was to spring up and flourish. For it was Charlemagne who laid the sure foundation for Christian government, and all the improvements of its subsequent superstructure. On this basis of Christian government, and Christian manners, and under the cover and vivifying influence of the luminous firmament of Christian faith, sprang human science out of the small fragments of ancient art and learning, which had survived all these mighty devastations, till at last it expanded into a fuller bloom, and grew into a more heavenly and Christian form. This new progress of social man under the Christian form of government, and this progress of the human mind in Christian science, mark the third epoch of modern history, or the seven centuries which elapsed from the reign of Charlemagne, to the discovery of the New World, and the commencement of the Reformation. It may naturally be supposed that these seven centuries which witnessed the progressive civilization of modern nations, and the vigorous growth and wide spread of Christian principles, were at the same time a period of struggle both in the state and in science, and that in each of these departments, the spirit of Christianity,

was intermixed with, and most injuriously and fatally thwarted and opposed by, many unchristian elements. And indeed, to discover and discriminate between these conflicting elements, to comprehend and determine their mutual bearings one towards the other, is the fit problem for historical philosophy. The progress of the Christian state and the advancement of Christian science, form during this period the main subject of an universal history, when this is not a mere collection of special or national histories, but truly universal, in the philosophic sense of the term; treating solely of those subjects common to all mankind, or which illustrate the general march of humanity. Hence all other historical views, dictated by a predilection for one's own country—inquiries into the political institutions of one, or several, or all existing states—a review of the circle of mercantile operations, and their gradual extension, and of the progress of the mechanical arts — and lastly, curious and erudite dissertations on literature, philology and the fine arts (however interesting, instructive, and in many respects useful, such special dissertations may be in themselves)—all these must be either entirely excluded from general history, or must at least occupy a place very subordinate to, and are deserving of notice only as far as they illustrate, what must ever constitute the main subject of the Philosophy of History. In the first ages of the world, it is often difficult to obtain satisfactory information,

and a competent degree of certainty on the subjects which are alone, or at least chiefly, worthy of attention. But in modern times, it is a far more arduous task to select out of the immense multitude and variety of facts susceptible of historical proof, those which are of a general interest for mankind, and amid the crowd of details steadily to preserve the general outline of history.

It would be a great error to refer to the Christian constitution of the state and of science, every remarkable or important incident in the history of government and of science, merely because such incidents have occurred in the middle age, or among Christian nations of later times. We must strive to form a loftier idea of the Christian model both in science and in government, so that the highest and noblest monuments in either, should from human infirmity be considered but faint approximations, I do not say, to the unattainable standard of an imaginary perfection, but to the sober reality of Christian truth. Although it is not possible rigidly to separate public life from public opinions, on account of the intimate union between both, and the mutual influence which government and science exercise over one another; yet as the state is the groundwork for the cultivation of science, and the former must precede the latter, I shall follow this historical order, and commence with the constitution of the Christian state.

As here the question is not as to the *Beau Ideal* of supreme perfection, or as to a precise, rigid, and scientific theory of the Christian state, (for which here at least, if not for the present age, the time may not have arrived)—but merely as to a general outline of such a theory—I shall only observe, that the Christian state must rest on the basis of religious feelings. For without feeling its relation to religion cannot be conceived—and such a mere relation, considered in itself, would lose its religious character. But the government which is founded on Christianity, is on that account limited, and is consequently in its very nature abhorrent either from absolute despotism, or the uncontrolled tyranny of popular factions. In the next place, the government founded on religion, is one in which sentiment, personal spirit, and personal character are the primary and ruling elements, and not the dead letter, and the written formula of a mere artificial constitution. In this last respect one may say, that the Christian government inclines very strongly towards monarchy; for in monarchy, it is the sacred person of the king, the character of the ruler, the spirit of his administration, confidence in his person, and attachment to the hereditary dynasty, which form the basis, the animating spirit, and vivifying principle of the social system. In a republic it is not the person, but the law which governs; nay, the written word of the law is there of the utmost importance; and thus the dead letter of

the constitution is in a republic almost as sacred, as in a monarchy the person called and consecrated to the functions of government by divine right. But more than this we should not say—namely, that the Christian goverment, founded as it is on personality and on sentiment, inclines *on the whole* strongly towards the monarchical form—a leaning which is by no means incompatible with many Republican usages and Republican Institutions of a subordinate kind. Still less should we exaggerate this idea so far, as to maintain that the Christian government is entirely and necessarily monarchical, even in its outward form; and that a Republic is objectionable at all times and under all circumstances without distinction. Such absolutism in the doctrines of public law, and in the theory of government, is very remote from true Christian principles. The unhistorical government of mere Reason—the destructive principle of revolution — is indeed totally incompatible with Christianity; principally because the Christian religion tolerates and recognizes all legal institutions, such as they are, without enquiring into their origin; (as the gospel not only left inviolate, but even respected the legality of the Roman dominion in the conquered and incorporated countries;) and also because the Christian notion of right, like the Christian system of government, is by no means absolute, but is ever qualified by circumstances. A Republican government, which is founded not so much on the

abstract or rationalist principle of absolute freedom and equality, but on ancient customs and hereditary rights, on freedom of sentiment and generosity of character, consequently on personality, is by no means essentially opposed to the true spirit of monarchy; still less is it inconsistent with the Christian theory of government. But a despotism, illegitimate not perhaps in its origin, but in its abuse of power, strikes at the first principles of the Christian state, whose mild, temperate, and historical character is as abhorrent from absolutism, as from the opposite principle of unqualified freedom and universal equality — the revolutionary principle, which involves the overthrow of all existing rights.

As in the Christian's estimation, the worth and excellence of an individual is not to be judged by his outward appearance or by the observance of certain forms, but by the sincerity of his inward sentiments; so the same observation will apply to states. It is the spirit and purpose of an action, the nature of a deed, the personal conduct displayed in a public measure; and not any outward form, which proves or determines the good or evil tendency of any important act, which may be the subject of history. That Christian tone and spirit which belongs to the government of the illustrious, but not immaculate Charlemagne, does not proceed from the circumstance, that he, like Alfred after him, solicited the counsels and co-operation of his Bishops in framing laws for the various pro-

vinces of his empire, (for many of these laws contained moral injunctions,) or that at Rome the Pope placed the Imperial crown upon his head. But the Christian spirit of his government is evinced by that lofty idea which filled up the whole of his active life—by his conception of the relations of church and state, and of the utility of science for the civilization of nations—by his project of an universal empire destined to embrace and protect all civilized nations—the noble fabric of modern Christendom, of which he laid the first foundation-stone, and which reveals his enlarged views, comprehending alike his own age and succeeding times.

But whenever we meet in history with a government which independently of outward forms, is founded on the love of divine justice—on a principle of self-devotion whereby rulers are ready to sacrifice their own interest and even their own existence in the cause of justice and of social order—these, we may be sure are the certain and indubitable marks of the realization of the Christian theory of law and government. On the other hand, wherever we perceive despotism or violence, or what we feel to be absolute wrong, though they be veiled under the sanction of spiritual or temporal power, then we may be sure the whole enterprise is unchristian, as the principle is unchristian. Of all the different forms of this political disease, of the manifold kinds of tyranny, whether ecclesiastical or secular, military or com-

mercial, domestic or municipal, academic or aristocratic, the despotism of popular licentiousness is the most reprehensible in principle, and the most destructive in its effects.

With the usages and institutions of the Germanic nations, this peculiar temper of the Christian religion perfectly harmonized; incomparably better at least, than with the arbitrary government of the Roman state, which even after the conversion of Constantine, still retained in all essential points a Pagan character. In the old German states, the system of hereditary monarchy mostly prevailed;—but it was quite alien from absolutism, and was intermixed with many Republican institutions, laws, and customs. The whole system of those governments was founded on the historical basis of ancient usages—on the pure, free and generous sentiment of honour—on personal glory and personal character and talents. As soon as this natural moral energy of the Germanic nations had received a religious consecration from Christianity, and those energetic, heroic souls had imbibed with fervour, simplicity, and humility, the maxims of the religion of love; all the elements of a truly Christian government, and Christian system of policy were then offered to mankind. The political history of those ancient times has been mostly represented in a too systematic point of view, for the purpose of favouring some particular object, or interest, or some favourite opinion of modern times; since

historians employ all their ingenuity in tracing step by step, and disclosing to our view the first rise and gradual growth of any particular form of government, or principle of right—such as the establishment of royalty on the one hand, and that of the constitution of the three orders on the other. But they remain quite unconcerned about every more exalted principle in society. To judge and appreciate not according to the standard of our own or any other age, but according to the dictates of eternal truth, the manners, the modes of thinking, the tone of society, the spirit and views which animated men, whatever was good or evil, christian or anti-christian in their sentiments, is with these writers a matter of the utmost indifference. If there is any exception from the truth of this remark, it is when they meet with some singular trait of manners or character—some historical paradox calculated to stimulate interest, and which they then never fail to sever from its general connexion with the age, to tear up from its natural roots, and exhibit to the curiosity of the beholder. And yet in such individual traits of character in the middle age, though they be at first remarked only from their singularity, and be not even fully understood, more traces of historical life and truth are to be found, than in those systematic representations of history, drawn up with some specific political view, and which aim at an elaborate dissection and violent disrupture of institutions, which in those

early times, were inseparably united in the life of Christian nations. If the best and most praiseworthy measures adopted in that first period of Christian polity, for the settlement and further improvement of the Christian state, and for the establishment and application of christian maxims and principles of government, were nothing more but a generons effort, a good intention, a rude design—a feeble, imperfect approximation towards a divine term—yet we must consider them as peculiar historical phenomena, leave them in their individual bearings, and not prematurely force them into any systematic connexion, or attach them to any fixed or formal principle of right; for in the Christian government, feeling and personality are the most essential things.

If I could overstep the narrow limits of this work, confined as it is to a rapid sketch of the main and essential facts in the historical progress of mankind, I should prefer to draw a portrait of the mode of government and prevalent opinions of that age, out of the many characteristic traits in the lives of its distinguished rulers, its great and virtuous kings and emperors, knights and heroes:—such as that Charlemange, who would rightly open the series, that pious King Alfred, who in a far more contracted sphere, was equally great, those first Saxon Kings and Emperors of Germany—princes distinguished for their religious and virtuous sentiments, their great and upright character, and

whose reigns exhibiting as they do, the paramount influence of religion on public life, constitute the happiest era, and the truly golden period of our annals. The peculiar nature and constitution, the internal spirit and essence of the Christian state, would be much more clearly and vividly represented by the examples of these great characters, who to the pure will of their energetic, heroic souls, united a practical knowledge of life, and a natural insight into the principles of Christian policy. Such a course I would prefer to entangling myself in the usual disputes about the respective relations of the spiritual and temporal powers, and all the contentious points involved in that matter; or to entering upon any dissertation respecting the decisive era in the developement of royalty and its rights, or in the progress of the constitution of the three estates, and of various municipal corporations; however useful and instructive such enquiries may be in the special history of particular countries. And even in the latter respect, those glorious names form a mighty epoch; and in the history of almost all the great European countries, we meet with some holy and magnanimous monarch, who laid the solid foundations of his country's constitution, or introduced a higher civility and refinement in life and manners. Such were in Hungary the holy King Stephen, and in France, the great St. Lewis, who in more unquiet times restored a better spirit, and for a while retarded the progress of corruption. There were also

other kings, heroes and emperors, like Rodolph of Hapsburgh, who without being honoured with the title of saints, were truly pious, chivalric and equitable monarchs, and may be esteemed and revered as the Christian regenerators of their age, and the founders of a true and religious system of government and manners. A lively sketch of such men and rulers, who acted and governed well and greatly according to Christian principles and views, would, I think, furnish a far more complete idea of the true nature of the Christian state in this its first period of developement, than any laboured or artificial definition. There are along with these individual characters, individual and transient periods of prosperity, which break out for one generation or more in the history of those early times; periods which can only be considered as historical exceptions from the general order of things. Even those more comprehensive, and so far more general political institutions, evidently peculiar to those Christian ages, and nowhere else to be found—like the truce of God, which repressed within certain limits the hereditary spirit of feud—or the spiritual chivalry in the orders of the Templars and of the Knights of St. John, consecrated to warfare in the cause of God, and opening as they did, in the time of the crusades, to the same spirit of chivalrous feud a higher path and a more noble career—all these political institutions, I say, springing out of the nature and exigencies of their age,

can be understood only by a reference to the circumstances and prevailing spirit of the times, and must therefore be judged as historical peculiarities. As they often sprang up suddenly without a visible or apparent cause, and as if by some high mysterious impulse, so they often sank again as rapidly; and the pure spirit—the true import of such institutions appeared but for a moment, like a silvery gleam; then they degenerated, or were transformed into something totally different. And we must not be astonished at this, since what is best and noblest in man — feeling and its divine quality, is most easily and rapidly impaired, and may sometimes indeed preserve an external vigour, when it has undergone an internal change, and assumed a direction opposed to God and all goodness. There were also particular rulers possessed of an energetic will and a comprehensive understanding, who exercised a wide and commanding, but pernicious influence on their age, and the world; and among these, the most noted were Barbarossa and that secret friend of the Saracens, the emperor Frederick the Second; princes who with some others, must be regarded as the first authors of the great dissension. After this dissension had broken out in the fearful struggle of the Guelphs and Ghibellines, and Christendom was divided into two parties; discord became general, pursued its resistless course, and acting in those distracted times like some new destroying law

of nature, absorbed all personality and its influence in the general abyss of error, or made it at least less conspicuous.

I will now endeavour to give a short sketch of the general progress of European society in this its first period of developement, and to point out the then peculiar nature and constitution of the Christian state;—from that epoch when Charlemange laid the first solid foundation for a permanent system of christian government and christian manners, down to the moment when an anti-christian spirit of discord broke out with incurable violence, and became universally predominant. I will at the same time endeavour to take an historical survey of the whole Christian West, as it has remained the theatre of the subsequent progress of society, and of the great transactions of the world down to our times.

In the blame so commonly lavished, (and not unreasonably, when we consider the historical consequences,) on the customary divisions in the Frankish or Carlovingian Empire, and the other German states, men forget that according to the old Germanic idea, a kingdom was nothing more than any other great family estate, or princely inheritance, and governed, like these, by the same law of descent. This was so from the earliest times among both the principal races of the Germans. In this manner we find the nation of the Goths divided into two kingdoms; and as the Saxons were with difficulty

united under one head in their own ancestral country on the Northern coast of Germany; so in the England which they had conquered and newly peopled, we find seven principalities or petty kingdoms of Anglo-Saxons co-existent with one another; and these were only by accident reduced to a less number, and but for a time blended into one sovereignty. We often ascribe to the men, and to the spirit of those times, pretensions quite inappropriate, inapplicable, and perfectly modern. So possessed are we with the notion of our times as to the natural and eternal boundaries of this or that country, of the predestination of a people to political unity, or of the necessary national unity of every state — notions or prejudices which are held as so many mathematical axioms, in which we make the highest idea of policy to consist, to which we ascribe an inviolable sanctity, and which in our reverence, and in some cases, we might almost say—idolatry, we exalt above every thing else, and would make every thing else subservient to. To the simplicity of those ancient times, the excellence and advantages of a mild, domestic, paternal, national sovereignty for the more convenient administration of smaller states, appeared great, and superior to every other consideration. Thus those who had to decide of themselves, and without the imperious call of duty—without the feeling of a strong necessity for undertaking, even at the sacrifice of a part at least of their own national

welfare, the heavy burden of the imperial office, in that Christian empire evidently established by divine Providence for the protection of the church, and all the nations belonging to it;—without this strong feeling of duty, I say, they never would have deviated from the good old simple usage of dividing the royal patrimony. The more so indeed as the glory they sought was rather of a chivalrous kind, consequently purely personal; and that favourite idol of modern times — national vanity, was perfectly unknown to them. Their institution, certainly, would not be adapted to our times; nor was it even suited to those immediately succeeding; but an age to be judged aright and duly appreciated, must be estimated by its own standard, and the opinions proper to it. That even a division of sovereignty and partition of kingdoms is not incompatible with the external union of the body politic for one general design, so long as the potentates are animated by a Christian and brotherly feeling, and a spirit of union as to this one object—the all-uniting bond of confederacy; is a truth which may be proved by many pleasing and glorious examples from the history of the earlier middle age, and from that of Germany especially. If on the one hand we would lay it down as a general historical law, and axiom of state, that separated or divided kingdoms and countries can never combine for one common object, nor remain permanently united in feeling nor Christian equity—

so on the other hand, we must remember that the division of nations according to certain natural boundaries, which we would fain regard as the only perfect and absolutely right one, is like the quadrature of the circle, a problem eluding all calculation, and remaining for ever insoluble, since each one, according to his peculiar political position, or national prejudices, views those eternal boundaries in a different light, and determines them differently. Thus in order to put an end to all discord and to the injurious system of partition, nothing would remain but the vulgar resource of an universal monarchy and military dominion — a resource which as often as it has been tried, has been as little justified or recommended by its historical results, as that custom of partition which prevailed in the German ancestral kingdoms of the earlier middle age.

The dangers of a bitter family feud, or of the mutual jealousies of the heirs to the several kingdoms as to their respective portions, when these grew to any considerable extent, were early enough perceived. It is to be observed that in the first division of the great Carlovingian empire into three parts, designed by Charlemagne himself, but accomplished only under his feebler successor; the inheritance assigned to the eldest and imperial brother—Lothaire, was together with Rome and Italy, the Rhenish district situate between France on the one side, and the interior of Germany on the other, and

extending from Switzerland to the sea—a district where the Romans had planted many and most flourishing colonies, and which for many ages back had been far superior in civilization and refinement to the countries on either side. With the same prospective care, Charlemagne had already fixed his residence at Aix-la-Chapelle, preferring the Rhenish province as the then true seat of civilization. But in the family quarrel and dissensions which ensued, this measure of Charlemagne as far as it was intended, had no other permanent effect than to cause amid the partitions of countries and changes of dynasty, the continuance down to very modern times, of Lorraine as an independent kingdom or dutchy. The Rhenish district long preserved its pre-eminence in refinement above the rest of Germany; and with some external changes, was long the seat of empire.

In that dark old world of the North, on which Christianity was just beginning to dawn, no monarch after Charlemagne, shone so conspicuously as the virtuous Alfred, King of the West Saxons in England. And the same remark is applicable not only to him, but to England in general, which during this first Christian period of modern history, far outshone all other countries in literature and science, as well as in religion, piety, and virtue. The great Pope, St. Gregory, as I have already mentioned, laid the foundations of Christianity and intellectual refinement in England, whither he

sent forty Missionaries; aud so active was their zeal and efficacious their influence, that in the succeeding age, this first school of Christianity in England sent forth to other countries the most eminent men of their time. Such were the German apostle and bishop, St. Boniface, and Alcuin, the learned friend and confidant of Charlemagne. Besides many Latin writers produced by this yet flourishing English school, the great Christian Philosopher Scotus Erigena, lived in England in the time of Alfred; and though this philosopher was perhaps not quite free from speculative error, he was far superior to his own age, and in the depth and originality of his conceptions, was not equalled, and certainly not surpassed for many succeeding centuries. King Alfred, who though a bard and a writer in his own native speech, prized equally the Latin literature, and who defended his country against the Danes with the most perseverant valour, was the first founder of the English constitution; for with the wisdom and pacific spirit of a lawgiver, he restored the old Saxon rights and privileges, and the regulations relating to the cities and the different orders of the state. It was his virtuous courage, which in the most trying adversity, ever remained cool and collected, that alone rescued the isle of freedom from the fierce, impetuous power of the Danes.

The successful naval expeditions of the Normans to all the coasts of Europe, as far as Sicily and even beyond it, and the incursion of

the Magiars into Europe, where they received the name of Hungarians, form in the ninth century the close, and are, as it were, the last reverberation, of the great immigration of the Northern nations, and must on that account not be entirely passed over in silence. This last maritime migration from the North began with a powerful and enterprizing ruler of Norway, the fair-haired Harold; and these naval expeditions which were undertaken, not merely from motives of vulgar piracy, or of martial adventure, but for the foundation and permanent settlement of new states, soon scoured all the coasts and regions of the Northern ocean, as well as of the Mediterranean sea. The province in France which these freebooters conquered, the French acknowledged by the title of duchy of Normandy; and they were glad enough thus to bind it to their king by the homage of fealty, and to attach it to, if not to incorporate it with, their kingdom. Called to Naples and Sicily by the Greeks, who demanded their aid against the Saracens, the Normans there founded for themselves a kingdom of long duration. After Christianity had introduced into Denmark a better system of government and legislation, the powerful Danish monarch, Canute the Great, ruled over England during this period of the Norman sway; till at last, after a short interval of contest, another Norman, William the Conqueror, issuing from France, founded a new dynasty in England, and established on the basis of the old free

Saxon constitution, a high chivalrous aristocracy.

From the remotest part of Eastern Asia, situate between the Uzi and the Patzinacites, an emigration of nations took a Westward course towards the country of the Chazars, and at last led the nation of the Magiars from their original seat to Pannonia, where, according to the testimony of contemporary writers, the Avars, the descendants of the ancient Huns, still lived under their Chagan. Once excited into tumultuous activity, these Hungarians (who were still Pagans) roved as far as the North of Italy, and down to Thessalonica in Greece, and to the very neighbourhood of Constantinople; they then advanced westward in large squadrons far into the interior of Germany, even to Saxony. It was here that the noble King Henry the First, opposed a vigorous resistance to their incursions, and Otho the Great put a final term to the progress of their arms by the victory on the banks of the Lech. Christianity, which was introduced into Hungary under Geisa, the father of King Stephen, established a milder system of manners and of legislation; a system which St. Stephen by a close union with Germany, brought to full maturity. At the same period, Poland under the happy influence of the Christian religion, which introduced here a better system of manners and legislation, was incorporated into the civilized community of the European nations, and with Germany in particular, formed

a very close political connexion. It is particularly pleasing to observe the very beneficial influence of Christianity in the promotion of agriculture, and in the advancement of intellectual refinement in the Northern vallies of Sweden, during the reigns of Olaus and St. Eric; when the old Hall of Odin at Upsal was finally destroyed, and the new religion obtained the victory.

During the period of the Norman glory, the Russians (a populous and widely spread Sclavonian nation, inhabiting the vast and ancient Sarmatia, formerly governed by the Goths) called to their assistance the Varangians, who established a new dynasty at Novogorod. Either from this circumstance, or from the former dominion of the Goths, the country was by the neighbouring Finnish tribes afterwards called Gothland. Russia received Christianity at the hands of the Byzantines—and thus in its remote North, remained a stranger to the Catholic West—the more so, indeed, as the country, invaded and desolated by the Moguls, long groaned under the oppressive yoke of these barbarians —till at length, in very recent times, and in the very struggle of regeneration, it has grown up into a mighty power. Thus the whole circuit of the Christian West, and all the kingdoms it included, was now tolerably well filled up; and it then consisted of ten principal countries or nations; but in forming this estimate we must not attend to minuter subdivisions or mere na-

tional varieties, or to the frequent partitions of kingdoms, and alterations of territory, amid various conflicting or successive dynasties; but we should keep in view only the general and permanent outline of the European states. Germany and Italy, which were respectively the seats of the Christian empire and the Papal dignity, formed the centre of Europe. Along with these two states, France and England were the most active, the most powerful, and the most influential members of the European commonwealth; while Spain was principally occupied with her own domestic contests against the Saracens. The Scandinavian countries were somewhat connected with the Germanic Empire, and Poland and Hungary, after they had embraced Christianity, were united with that empire in the closest bonds. Lastly, in the far Northern and Eastern extremities of Europe, the Byzantine Empire and the kingdom of the Muscovites, (closely connected by the ties of religion,) formed the extreme and remotest members of the Christian Republic. Such was the geographical extent, and such the historical situation of Christendom at that period.

After the downfal of the Carlovingian family, the empire was restored to its pristine vigour by the election of the noble Conrad, Duke of the Franconians. This pious, chivalrous, wise and valiant monarch had to contend with many difficulties, and fortune did not always smile upon his efforts. But he terminated his royal

career with a deed, which alone exalts him far above other celebrated conquerors and rulers, and was attended with more important consequences to after-times, than have resulted from many brilliant reigns; and this single deed, which forms the brightest jewel in the crown of glory that adorns those ages, so clearly reveals the true nature of Christian principles of government, and the Christian idea of political power, that I may be permitted to notice it briefly. When he felt his end approaching, and perceived that of the four principal German nations, the Saxons alone by their superior power, were capable of bringing to a successful issue the mighty struggle in which all Europe was at that critical period involved, he bade his brother carry to Henry Duke of Saxony, hitherto the rival of his house, and who was as magnanimous as fortunate, the holy lance and consecrated sword of the ancient kings, with all the other imperial insignia. He thus pointed him out as the successor of his own choice, and in his regard for the general weal, and in his anxiety to maintain a great pacific power capable of defending the common interests of Christendom, he disregarded the suggestions of national vanity, and sacrificed even the glory of his own house. So wise and judicious, as well as heroic a sacrifice of all selfish glory, for what the interests of society, and the necessities of the times evidently demand, is that principle which forms the very foundation, and constitutes the true

spirit of all Christian government. And by this very deed Conrad became after Charlemagne, the second restorer of the Western Empire, and the real founder of the German nation; for it was this noble resolve of his great soul which alone saved the Germanic body from a complete dismemberment. The event fully justified his choice. The new King Henry, victorious on every side, laboured to build a great number of cities, to restore the reign of peace and justice, and to maintain the purity of Christian manners and Christain institutions; and prepared for his mightier son, the great Otho, the Restoration of the Christian Empire in Italy, whither the latter was loudly and unanimously called. This first age of the Saxon Emperors was the happy period wherein Germany possessed the greatest power and resources, and enjoyed great internal peace and prosperity. It is in this period, too, that we trace the first beginnings of mental refinement, in many excellent and remarkable productions of the Latin school, which were soon succeeded by the successful cultivation of the vernacular tongue. Quite as unhistorical, and even still more absurd than the reproaches urged against the Carlovingians for their impolitic partition of the Empire, are those repeated lamentations and eternal regrets in which modern historians indulge, whenever they have occasion to notice the frequent expeditions of the German Kings and Emperors to Rome and Italy, and the con-

nection which subsisted between the German nation and the Christian Imperial Dignity—a connection which these writers consider a great misfortune. They do not enter into the true idea of this dignity — they do not comprehend the urgent need of those times for an universal Protectorate, which might, like a bulwark, defend Europe against internal anarchy, and the invasions of barbarous nations; and which might prevent the light of Christianity from being perhaps extinguished in a second night of universal barbarism. The modern critics of those ancient times cannot understand that high Christian feeling—that exalted principle of self-devotion, whereby a nation from its internal strength and natural situation, was called by the general voice to take on itself this burden for the common weal, and to be the firm sustaining centre of the European system—a calling which must necessarily occasion a mighty loss and heavy sacrifice of repose and prosperity to the nation so undertaking the momentous charge. Without this firm central power, which held together the European nations, they would, yielding at the first shock, have succumbed under the attacks of the Mahometans or Moguls.

Without this central power, Europe would have been broken up into a multitude of petty states, and have sunk into eternal and irremediable anarchy; whereas now, great as might be at times the confusion, and fearfully wild the spirit of warfare, there was always a resource

and a remedy against such calamities. As the religious vow of the knight dignified his duties into a sort of ecclesiastical warfare; so the high functions of the Emperor were considered as partly ecclesiastical, and he was looked on as the sworn liegeman of Almighty God, intrusted with the high sword of universal justice. It was the exalted idea of this arduous and momentous charge, far more than schemes of selfish ambition and idle glory, that filled up the lives of the most active and powerful of those ancient emperors. Hence this common regard for the general welfare of Christendom, which the obligations of their respective stations imposed upon them, produced a very intimate union between the heads of the spiritual and temporal authority in Europe, and placed them in a state of mutual dependance. When the mighty emperor, Otho the Great, had been called into Italy, and had witnessed with his own eyes the state of general corruption and degeneracy at Rome, where among the baronial factions which surrounded the Papal chair, one of the more powerful families sought by the most culpable intrigues to obtain a lasting, and as it were, hereditary possession of the holy see; he exerted his imperial authority, and deposed the Pope, who by means so unlawful had obtained his dignity, and on whom the general voice of the age had long pronounced a sentence of condemnation, causing a worthier Pontiff to be elected in his room. There still existed among

those of the same mind in Christendom, an unerring feeling, whereby the righteousness or unrighteousness of any action, its real spirit and purpose, were easily and promptly determined without any anxious regard to mere outward forms. But when that uniformity of feeling had disappeared, and with it feeling itself had ceased to be a ruling principle of public and political life, the standard of political estimation rested almost exclusively on outward forms, and the contentious point of law involved in those forms; and as in every historical fact men saw but a precedent fertile of application, or even dangerous in its consequences, they no longer formed a pure historical judgment on the general spirit of any great action, and they almost lost the very notion of such a thing. The whole world at that time was unanimous in justifying the conduct of the great Otho in that affair. When however the clergy of Rome, in their first feelings of gratitude and admiration at their deliverance from intolerable anarchy, and the toils of an unworthy family, conferred on the emperor the future and permanent power of choosing the Pope, it might have been easily foreseen that so extended a prerogative, little compatible as it was with the independence of the church, would in the sequel provoke a strong reaction. This accordingly took place about a hundred years later, when a man of great energy of character, Pope Gregory VII.

arose to reform the church, and achieve its independence against the many unlawful encroachments of the secular power. And when a prince, distinguished indeed for his warlike qualities, but utterly characterless and animated with an unquiet spirit, who, according to the unanimous testimony of his contemporaries, had incurred many and most serious charges; when this prince first attacked and deposed the Pope, and the latter laid him under an excommunication, the conduct of the Pontiff was not only in strict accordance with the general opinion of the age as to the mischievous rule of this secular potentate; but was quite conformable to the then prevailing doctrine of public law, which sanctioned the responsibility and accountability of the temporal power. Hence, Henry IV. found it more expedient to loose himself from this excommunication by a feint submission, than to impugn it by open force; although he never afterwards ceased persecuting the Pope, whose constancy was proved in adversity and persecution. In our own times, justice has been at last rendered to the great qualities of this Pontiff, and it has been allowed he was perfectly free from all selfish views, and that the austere and decisive energy of his character sprang from no other motive than a burning zeal for the reform of the church and of mankind. The German historians in particular, and in truth those on the Protestant side, have been the

first to perform this act of justice; and the name of Gregory VII. who lived in times so different from our own, has long ceased to be with the Germans a watch-word for party-strife.

But on the matter at issue, or rather on the opinion the world then entertained respecting it, it will be necessary to say a few words. That the Sovereign is in no way responsible seems in modern times to be considered an immutable axiom, or rather the first of all axioms in the science of government; and whenever a monarch in the history of the middle ages, however vicious he may be and however forgetful of his dignity, meets with the treatment of the Emperor Henry IV., political indignation is raised to the highest pitch. No one can have the slightest intention of questioning the perfect justness of the above state-axiom, under certain given circumstances. But, if the question be a parallel between the middle ages and modern times, we may oppose to the scandal of the ecclesiastial excommunication pronounced against this prince during the former period, the still more fatal example which has occurred within the last three centuries, of the public execution of several monarchs, and of the assassination of many others. Thus, in this respect, the history of the middle age stands purer; and this warns us to decide with less precipitancy on the superiority of our own standard of political morality, and on the greater perfection of

modern principles of state-policy.* According to the feeling of right, and the prevailing maxims of public law in that age, a mutual controul and responsibility subsisted between church and state, and between the heads of either. In the most esteemed constitutions of modern states, there is also a mutual dependence and possible controul. Thus the prince may dissolve the parliament, or resist its enactments by his veto;

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* In confirmation of what Schlegel asserts in the text, I shall cite a few passages from some distinguished Protestant Historians of Germany. To shew my readers the enlarged, liberal and enlightened views taken by the Protestant writers of that country on the political influence of the Papacy in the middle age, and on the services which at that momentous period the hierarchy rendered to the cause of social order, liberty and civilization, it were easy to transcribe matter more than sufficient to fill a volume. Let a few examples suffice.—"The Northern nations, says the celebrated historian of Switzerland, John Muller, rushing in upon the most beautiful countries of Europe, trampling under foot, or disturbing and convulsing all social institutions, menaced the whole Western world with a barbarism similar to that which, under the Ottoman sceptre, has obliterated every thing good, great and beautiful that ancient Greece and Asia had produced. Yet the Bishops and other Dignitaries (Vorsteher) of the church, strong in their authority, contrived to impose a restraint on those giants of the North who, as regards intelligence, were but children. They would not have been more successful than the Greek prelates, had they been subject to four different Patriarchs. The Popes of Rome, (whose primitive history is as obscure and defective as that of the ancient Roman Republic, since we know little of the first Popes, except that they devoted their lives for the faith, as Decius had done for his country,) the Popes, we say, employed their authority with the same address which we admire in the ancient Senate, to render

and, on the other hand, the parliament, by withholding its sanction to the imposition of taxes, or refusing the grant of subsidies, may weaken the sinews of government, and summon, not indeed the king, who seems to be regarded as a mere cipher, but the ministry to a most severe reckoning. The government loses all stay and support, when the Opposition obtains a permanent

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their see independent, subject to its immediate action the whole Western hierarchy, and establish its sway, far beyond the boundaries of the ancient empire, on the ruins of the Northern religions. Thus whoever refused to honour the Christ, trembled before the Pope; and one faith and one church were preserved in Europe, amid the breaking up and subdivision of the newly-founded kingdoms into a thousand petty principalities. We know what Pope made Charlemagne the first Emperor; *but who made the first Pope?* The Pope, they say, was only a Bishop; yes, but at the same time, the *Holy Father*, the *Sovereign Pontiff*, the great Caliph, (as he was called by Ho-Albufreda, Prince of Hamath) of all the kingdoms and principalities, of all the lordships and cities of the West. It is he who controuled by the fear of God the stormy youth of our modern states. At present even, when his authority is no longer formidable, he is still very puissant by the benedictions which he showers; he is still an object of veneration to innumerable hearts, honoured by the kings who honour the nations, invested with a power, before which in the long succession of ages, from the Cæsars to the House of Hapsburg, a host of nations and all their great names have vanished.

We declaim against the Pope! as if it were such a misfortune that there should exist an authority to superintend the practice of Christian morality, and to say to ambition and to despotism, Halt!—so far, and no further! *Bisher, und nicht weiter!*" So speaks the illustrious John Muller. The celebrated Herder allows "that without the hierarchy, Europe in all probability had be-

and decided majority. Whether this mutual dependence and controul in the modern theory of government be less dangerous than in the ancient system, is a question which it is not so easy to decide. As all the institutions of the middle age had a religious spirit and character, it cannot excite our surprise that this opposition between the spiritual and temporal power, and

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come the prey of tyrants, the theatre of eternal wars, or even a desert."

"The hierarchy," says Beck, "opposed the progress of despotism in Europe, preserved the elements of civilization, and upheld in the recollection of men what is so easily effaced—the ties which bind earth to Heaven. Those ignorant men, as we affect to call them, have settled almost all the countries of Europe. The fruits of that time are the formation of the third estate, whence dates the true existence of nations—and the establishment of cities, wherein social life and true liberty were developed."—*Beck on the Middle Age*, page 13. *Leipzick*, 1824.

"The weak," says Ruhs, in his Manual of the History of the Middle Age, "then found in spiritual authority a better protection against the encroachments of the powerful than afterwards in the balance of power — a system which, as it was *a thing purely abstract, devoid of all external guarantee*, must soon have lost all influence. The Pope was always present to terminate the wars which had broken out among Christian princes, and to protect the people against the injustice and tyranny of their rulers. The Clergy therefore every where showed themselves opposed to the power of kings, when the latter wished to become perfectly absolute—they wished not to domineer over them, but confine them within the legitimate bounds of their authority. The Priesthood was consequently always for princes, when powerful vassals attacked the rights of the Sovereign—they were the natural and constant guardians of the rights and liberty of all classes."—*Manual of the History of the Middle Age.* 1816.—*Trans.*

this mutual dependence of the heads of church and state should have been founded in religion, and in the religious character and purpose of the Imperial, as well as of the Papal, dignity. It was only by the excesses of passion and violence, by the exaggerated proceedings of both the spiritual and temporal powers, as well as by unfortunate accidents and a human imperfection, by no means inherent in the nature of the thing itself, that the dispute between church and state grew to such a fearful magnitude, was so prolonged, and often became almost incurable. But how easily, even then, peace might be restored between the spiritual and temporal powers by the wisdom, the prudence, the good-will, and conciliatory temper of both, is proved by the peaceable termination of the quarrel respecting investiture under the successor of Henry IV. In the sequel, indeed, the harsh, stern, inflexible character of the Ghibelline Emperors, especially Barbarossa, again perplexed this question; when from the contest growing more and more violent betwixt the Guelfs and Ghibellines, the political schism became wider and wider, and discord seemed to be again the mistress of the world.

END OF LECTURE XIII.

LECTURE XIV.

On the struggles of the Guelfs and Ghibellines.—Spirit of the Ghibelline age.—Origin of romantic poetry and art.—Character of the scholastic science and the old jurisprudence.—Anarchical state of Western Europe.

THE most rapid sketch of the history of the middle age, if it contained but a few lively, characteristic and faithful traits on a subject inexhaustible in itself, would suffice to convince any reasonable man that great characters, (abounding almost more than in any other period of history,) important interests, mighty motives, and lofty feelings and ideas were there in mutual collision; and that in what is called the anarchy of the middle age we find an active and stirring life, the most splendid feats of heroism, and many luminous traces of a higher power. The most careful consideration and profound investigation of the history of those ages, invariably discovers that all that was then great and good in the state, as well as in the

church, proceeded from Christianity, and from the wonderful efficacy of religious principles. Whatever was imperfect, defective, and hurtful, belonged not to that moral principle which animated society, and which was itself the best, the noblest, and the soundest; but was in the character of men, we might almost say, in the character of the age itself, which, though perhaps not originally and purposely selfish, had yet become so in the violence of the conflict. And by selfishness, I do not precisely understand a vulgar self-interest, or an ordinary ambition, but that absolute will or conduct which springs from some unalterable resolution, which, hurrying from one extreme to another, is sure to produce a perpetual alternation of extreme measures. In some cases this conduct proceeded from a want of penetration, prudence, and steadiness, which did not always accompany the deeds of heroic enthusiasm, the astonishing energy of will and strength of character which distinguished the men of those ages. The principle then really bad, the principle hostile to good, must be ascribed to that inclination to discord, innate in man, or which at least has become his second nature—an inclination which, when united with those other mighty qualities of the age, assumed indeed the most formidable shape.

The whole middle age, however, must not by any means be depicted as a period of universal anarchy; as, from the great difference of times, and the fact that much in the manners and poli-

tical institutions of those ages is now scarcely intelligible, modern writers are but too apt to indulge in this strain of censure. Above all, we must be careful to distinguish in the history of the middle ages the variety of epochs. As long as those religious principles on which church and state depended, were maintained in their unity and intregrity, the social stability of that first and happier period is indeed remarkable, and forms a striking contrast with the succeeding age. For private feuds, restrained within certain bounds by the manners of chivalry and the laws of honour, or the more protracted, and frequently renewed struggles of a warlike nation to repel the inroads of barbarians, or the aggressions of turbulent neighbours, are no adequate proofs of general anarchy. But a full knowledge and just appreciation of the power of principle, which during that better period was the Christian foundation of the state, is of so much more importance to our age, as in these times when principle has given way to the mutable opinion of the moment, and the latter exerts so mighty an influence on public life; though men have the power to throw off this ursurped dominion, they will not return to that unity and stabilty of principle, however strongly they may feel the necessity of restoring its saving influence. No parallel could be more profitable and instructive than the comparison between an age and a state, where principle was predominant, and another where opinion was paramount.

All that was great and good in the history of the middle age, as I observed at the commencement of this lecture, existed only in fragments, and this has very much contributed to heighten the appearance of anarchy throughout the whole of this great period of human history. Of this the blame must be sought for in a combination of many injurious causes, and in the resistance of many opposing elements. That wonderful power of regeneration, by which the whole of Western Christendom, after every mighty destruction, and reign of confusion in church and state, has, in a form somewhat modified, sprung up anew, renovated and exalted, can be ascribed only to that religion which was in Christian countries the first, and for so many centuries the apparently almost indestructible support of the social edifice. In many and memorable periods of regeneration, down to our own times, this truth has been repeatedly manifested; unless perhaps this self-renovating power conspicuous in the progress of Christian Europe, as well as of the particular nations composing it, languishing and decaying by degrees, become at last utterly extinct.

Among the characteristic, remarkable, and peculiarly Christian institutions of the middle age, we ought especially to mention that ecclesiastical truce, or peace of God, which towards the commencement of the eleventh century, opposed a powerful barrier to the growing and restless spirit of private warfare. Without

its being possible to specify exactly how or where this institution first arose, it was at once proclaimed in several places, and generally received with pious faith, as a voice of reconciliation from above, an immediate revelation and benign dispensation of divine Providence; and every week the tolling of the bell announced the sacred truce from Wednesday evening to Monday morning, during which time all feuds were to subside, and all hostilities to cease. It may indeed here be asked in the spirit of modern times, why were only four, and not the whole seven days of the week fixed upon, for the cessation of disorder? and it may be further said that a severe criminal code, and a prompt, vigorous and enlightened administration of the law, would have rendered such expedients unnecessary. And it is thus that men speak and reason without any knowledge of that age; for many feuds, troubles, and contests then existed, as in all ages have existed and still exist, which no criminal legislation can reach: and who will not deem it the part of prudence and a real gain, when peace is not attainable, to obtain at least a safe and honourable armistice, or to subtract from the principle of war four sevenths of its baneful influence and actual duration? And how happy would men have accounted themselves, if, in other and later times of disorder, when nought was reverenced or respected, and every thing sacred was an object of hatred and persecution, they could, amid the general confu-

sion, have found shelter under such a wall of safety, or been blessed with such a holiday of peace, though only at particular times of the week! We should rather admire the power of religion, whereby such a prohibition without the aid of external force, or secular authority, and running directly counter to the ruling passion of the age, was received with such pious faith, and followed with such humble docility.

In the first crusade, religious feeling and enthusiasm was the great spring of action; and in the outset, at least, it was far more the glowing eloquence of Peter the hermit, his affecting description of the Holy Land, and of the holy places groaning under the Saracen yoke, which contributed to bring about this memorable expedition, than the pretended policy of the Popes for causing the depression of regal power, and the promotion of popular freedom. These mighty consequences, though in fact historically true, became apparent only at a much later period, and so far from being pre-concerted, were then not even foreseen. As the first Crusade occurred in the most brilliant period of Norman glory, the Norman heroes, especially those from France, took a very active and prominent part in it. The warfare which the Saracens waged against Christendom was considered (and then perhaps not without reason,) as a state of permanent and universal hostility. The chivalrous and defensive wars of Christian nations against the unbelievers were looked upon in the same light;

and if we may judge from posterior events, Jerusalem and Egypt, in that long and memorable contest between Europe and Asia, could very well be regarded, both in a military and political point of view, as the bulwarks of Christendom. Feats of prodigious, and almost incredible, heroism were achieved in the Holy Land; and, at the close of the eleventh century, the victorious cross was planted in the holy city, and the pious Christian hero, Godfrey, proclaimed King of Jerusalem, though this title, as suited only to the divine Son of David, he with all humility renounced.

In this holy city the first two spiritual orders of chivalry sprang up; the knights of St. John, who took up arms for the defence of pilgrimage, and in their vows combined the care of the sick pilgrims with the management of the sword; and the Templars, so called after the temple of Solomon, and from a recollection of the remarkable secrets connected with that edifice. Chivalrous institutions of this kind, wherein Christianity contrived to blend the most opposite qualities and inclinations of human nature, could not have sprung up under a mathematical government of reason, or in a state where every thing is reduced to the level of a dead uniformity, and general equality, and where all feeling and personality are effaced. But the voice of ages has decided completely in favour of these marvellous institutes, and even in our own times, amid all the changes and fluctuations

of opinion, they have preserved the respect, and obtained the forbearance, of mankind.

Even in the second Crusade which took place about fifty years later, when the new progress of the Saracen arms appeared to threaten the safety of the holy city, it was far more the pious eloquence of St. Bernard than any scheme or calculation of policy, which set the whole European world in motion. The number of warriors and armed pilgrims who, under the guidance of the Emperor Conrad, and the King of France, poured in upon the Holy Land, is computed at more than half a million. The religious enthusiasm and chivalric heroism which formed the sole and animating principle of the whole enterprise, were not always accompanied with sufficient prudence, wisdom and circumspection. The want of these qualities at least, as regarded the influences of climate, the physical wants of so vast an army, and a geographical knowledge of localities, is too often apparent; and in default of this necessary foresight and preparatory information, many thousands perished in the second as well as in the first Crusade; a fate which indeed is not unfrequent in wars, where great bodies of people are exposed to toil and hardship in a foreign climate. These expeditions were indeed like new migrations of nations, which took an opposite direction from the first, and rolled backward from Europe towards ancient Asia. The great multitude of men engaged, would sufficiently account for these memorable

expeditions, as it proves the redundance of population in Europe, which sought on this occasion, and by means of this kind, to disburden itself of its surplus numbers. And if this numerous population may have given rise to, or afforded materials for, turbulence and anarchy, still on the other hand, it furnishes a proof that that anarchy was not of so destructive and depopulating a nature, as the descriptions of modern historians would sometimes lead us to suppose.

The real point of transition in German history from good to evil,—from those Christian principles which were ever predominant in the earlier period, to the unappeasable contests of the Guelfs and Ghibellines in the later middle age, must be fixed in the reign of the Emperor Frederick the First. The hostile treatment of the old Saxon race, the destruction of that first and greatest of the old national dutchies of the Germans, was occasioned by the jealousy of the East Franconians under the dynasty of that race; and this measure, begun during the reign, (in every respect so mischievous) of Henry the Fourth, who thus became chargeable with this mighty injustice towards the whole German nation, was now brought to a head by the Emperor Barbarossa. And thus, with the most signal ingratitude, was cut off by the root that noble stem whence German glory and German power had sprung; for the reigns of the great Saxon Emperors form precisely the most prosperous and most brilliant period of German

history, such indeed as has never been again witnessed. With the same unrelenting severity and atrocious cruelty, this Ghibelline Emperor destroyed the confederate cities of Lombardy, and with them crushed the fair plant of Italian civilization just then beginning to blossom.

These two great historical parties — the Guelfs and Ghibellines, are the same which we meet with in other periods of history, and even in our own times, though under other names, often in a form very different from that of the present day, and not always in the same relative position towards each other; but in the middle age they appeared in the larger and more gigantic proportions of the vigorous, heroic character belonging to that epoch. There is ever the one party aspiring after greater freedom, and the other immovably attached to the ancient faith, and to the principles it inculcates. That the liberal principles of innovation should, according to the peculiar complexion which these opinions take in every age, have emanated even from imperial power, and should have sought to establish their dominion in the world by force of arms, is not improbable in itself; and examples of a like kind are not wanting in history. And in this shape we find these principles in the middle age, where for a long while they exerted the greatest influence, and at last became almost predominant. On the other hand the legitimate attachment to the old permanent principle of faith appeared here in the form of an ecclesias-

tical opposition to secular ascendancy. But in the time of Barbarossa, the solemn reconciliation which took place between this Emperor and the Pope, restored harmony between the heads of church and state, and at last composed the long feud. This powerful Emperor, accompanied by the King of France, and the lion-hearted Richard, undertook a new crusade, in order to deliver Jerusalem which had been wrested from the Christians by Saladin; but before he could accomplish his design, death terminated his active career.

Although the last Ghibelline Emperor Frederick the Second, had been educated by Pope Innocent III., a Pontiff distinguished by his enlarged views, and great intellectual endowments, and who had undertaken the care and guardianship of the Emperor's childhood; yet the old dispute broke out again under this monarch with more violence and more implacable animosity than ever. This quarrel was never more appeased, at least during the sway of Frederick II. and his family; and it terminated only with the downfal of the Hohenstaufen, the most powerful of all the princely houses of the middle age. Yet the Ghibelline name, heretofore stamped in characters of blood upon the earth, subsisted a long while yet; and for ages after, the Ghibelline spirit continued to be the prevailing one in Europe. Although the later Swabian Princes and Emperors of this house, such as Henry VI. and others, were the patrons

of poetry, and of the Provençal minstrels and German Minnesingers; yet they all resembled one another in an unbending sternness of character. Henry VI. perpetrated the most enormous cruelties at Naples; the blood-thirsty Ezzelin, while Governor of Lombardy under Frederick the Second, has left behind him so fearful a recollection in Italy, such a character in the pages of history, that his very name need only be mentioned, and will dispense with all minuter historical details. The last of this family, Conradin, was an innocent victim of the public hatred borne to his ancestors, and he perished on a scaffold at Naples by the hands of Charles of Anjou, the brother of St. Lewis, who had seized on the kingdom of the two Sicilies, the lawful patrimony of the royal youth. The Emperor Frederick the Second—a prince who for his times had received a most polite education, and was endowed with the greatest and most original powers of mind,—was not only accused by the Pope in the excommunication he pronounced against him of a secret but decided enmity to the Christian religion; but in the general opinion of the world, laboured under the same suspicion. However, by a prudent peace, which this prince concluded with the Sultan of Egypt, he terminated his crusade more successfully than his grandfather had done his own; for by this he won back the holy places, and placed the crown of Jerusalem on

his head. He was the first who brought into Europe the Arabic translation of Aristotle's works; and as at this period a mighty change took place in the science and philosophy of the middle age, and as even the art and poetry of European nations began to display new life and energy, it may not be amiss to give here a rapid sketch of these important changes, as they serve to characterize the times,

Chivalry was in itself the poetry of life; what wonder then that that life of imagination, should have opened a new fountain of poesy in the traditional songs, the fairy lays, the varied minstrelsy, and knightly narratives of Germany and France, Spain and England, since in these countries, chivalry was the ruling element of society, and had made the greatest progress?—For the more immediate object of this Philosophy of History,—and in order to contemplate the progress of mankind in matters more serious and important, I have thought the moral principles of men in the middle age, and their political doctrines, as they were founded on religion, or on the system of opposition to religion, to be of far greater moment and importance than the mere æsthetic part of those ages; for sentimentalists may indulge in a certain vague, superficial love and predilection for the times of chivalry, for the romantic spirit of the chivalrous life, and of the chivalrous poetry, and of the whole system of modern art which has thence emanated; and nevertheless

all the deeper problems of life involved in that momentous epoch may remain unexamined, unsolved, or even misunderstood.

On the nature of this romantic tendency, inasmuch as it exerted a mighty influence on life, and was a motive of vast and undoubted weight in many of the most important historical events of those ages, I shall merely say a word by way of psychological illustration; for this is applicable to the prevailing forms of mind, the peculiar intellectual bearings of whole nations and ages, as to those of individuals. As where opinion is the ruling principle of life—it is very soon broken, divided, parcelled out and lost in a chaos of heterogeneous theories, and the age—the world—life itself are involved in interminable disputes; so when religious feeling constitutes the primary principle of life; and it hath been dismembered, and torn from its right centre, been driven to some extreme; and opinions flowing from this source have been carried into action; then all the great transactions of public life exhibit that overruling influence of imagination, perceptible not in the earlier, but in the later periods of the middle age, especially from the great epoch of the Crusades. Although these and other like great historical events of that period bear many noble traces of the high religious source whence they sprang; yet such a paramount influence of imagination over real life, must in this partial excess be regarded as the consequence of the dismemberment of man's

psychological powers—a symptom of the dissolution of that internal harmony which can never subsist in society, unless it be previously established in consciousness. The radical vice of the middle age—that is to say, the one most prevalent in its later period from the time of the Ghibellines—if one may venture to characterize it with such psychological generality—is discernible in the productions of the poetry, art and science of that age. And the relations which these bore to society — the distinctive character—the peculiar spirit of this critical period in the progress of Christian nations, are matters of the highest interest and greatest moment. This vice consisted in that disposition to extremes—that leaning towards the absolute I have already spoken of, as manifested in will, in determination, in rule—or in science, speculation, and poetry. The first germ, or at least the first disposition to this fault, lies in the very origin of modern nations, especially those five whose political existence sprang out of the union of the Germanic constitution, manners, and character, with the Latin civilization, literature, and language in the Romanic countries; or which at least were formed by a very strong infusion of the Roman spirit—I mean the German and English, the French, Spanish, and Italian nations. Where the character of the German tribes, the free, heroic energy of Germanic nature was blended and incorporated with the strong worldly sense of the Romans by the

influence of Christian principles and religious love; there sprang out of that happy union those great and mild characters, to which I have already drawn your attention, and which flourished during the first period of the German Empire and of the middle age. But as soon as the influence of the Christian religion began to decline, and its power was enfeebled, clouded or obscured, the two elements, which had been united in the human race, fell asunder; and on one side was to be seen nothing but mere Roman astuteness (as is often enough the case in the later history of France and Italy); and on the side of the Germanic nations, nothing but a rude martial impetuosity and chivalric pride, uncontrolled and unsoftened by the principle of religion. Or when again the rigid principles of that old worldly sense and instinct of dominion, which belonged to the Romans, were conjoined with the heroic energy of the North, without however the healing and conciliatory influence of the religion of love; this combination, which is conspicuous in the vehement but fearful characters engaged in the Ghibelline contests, was indeed the most unfortunate of all.

How the tendency towards the absolute—that abyss to mankind, which along with love, confounds and swallows up all life—then hurried the political world from one extreme to another, we have already mentioned, so far as was necessary for our object.

But even in the art and poetry, as well as the

science of the middle age, this leaning towards the absolute is equally apparent, and the more so, as both reached their full maturity at that period only when this had become the ruling spirit of the age. As, on one hand, the chivalrous poetry, especially in its origin, was excessively fantastical, until later it was fashioned into a form of milder symmetry, and made to pour forth the touching, heart-felt tones of romantic art; so on the other hand the scholastic philosophy was bewildered in a maze of subtleties not so much metaphysical as merely logical, and often quite destitute of sense. The singular manner, indeed, in which the Italian poet Dante, has in his mighty poem of visions, wherein he displays the most masterly and classical condensation of language, and the profoundest poetical art, contrived to sustain in his progress through the three regions of the invisible world that fantastic spirit, (which was not confined to the chivalrous poetry, but was common to every department of imagination in that age,) next the stern maxims of the Ghibelline state-policy, and a congenial worship of Roman antiquity, and has managed to unite all these qualities with the subtle distinctions of the scholastic philosophy; this singular manner, indeed, has never been an object of general imitation, nor has it opened a path to the subsequent labours of art. But this work will ever remain an extraordinary, wonderful, and characteristic monument, wherein the peculiar spirit

of this first scholastico-romantic epoch of European art and science is displayed in a most remarkable manner. In this spirit there were many heterogeneous elements, not confined to their separate and distinct spheres, but often in the strangest juxta-position, or rather confusion. And thus a regular scholastic science of love, with all the borrowed forms of the philosophy of the day, formed often the purport of the most tender romantic lays or devices; and logical antitheses, syllogisms, and subtleties were solved in rhyme and verse, with a most charming play of fancy. It is these vagaries (and so they are in many respects) which so captivate our feelings in the poetry of Petrarch—one of the restorers of ancient literature and of modern learning.

More strongly still than in its poetry, the richness of an inventive imagination displayed itself in the wonderful architecture of the middle age, as so many splendid monuments in Germany, England, a part of France, and in the North of Italy and Venice can attest. The style of the Byzantine churches was the first and principal model of this Gothic architecture; though a fantastic monument of Arabic architecture may here and there perhaps have had some influence in its formation. The elaborate and ornate style, and the fantastic singularity of this architecture, breathe the true spirit of the German middle age. At this time, painting, too, began to make some progress in Italy and Ger-

many; though its progress was incomparably slower than that of architecture, and the art reached its perfection only in the fifteenth century; but devoted entirely to religious subjects, and consecrated to the use of churches or private devotion, painting remained, down to the time of Raphael, an art peculiarly Christian, and displayed the profoundest import, and the most masterly power. From this period, renouncing, for the most part, the religious character of the elder Christian painting, art began to be affected by that enthusiasm for the Pagan antique, which indeed was not limited to the fine arts, but was the prevailing character of literature and science in this second period of European culture. And I have made these few remarks, not so much for the sake of art itself, which would require a separate investigation, but as tending to elucidate the various epochs and stages in the progress of modern civilization.

It was an ill-boding gift that the Ghibelline Emperor made to Europe when he brought from the East the works of Aristotle, translated, or rather burlesqued, into Arabic, and thence turned again into Latin, till at last they became often perfectly unintelligible. The elder Christian philosophers belonging to the first period of the middle age, such as in England (which still retained a high pre-eminence in Latin literature and Christian science,) a Scotus Erigena, the contemporary of Alfred,—a St. Anselm, so highly revered in theology,—and afterwards in France,

an Abelard, and also a St. Bernard, in whose eloquence there runs so pure a vein of piety—and so charming a mysticism of feeling—all these elder Christian philosophers, both in thought and language were incomparably clearer and more precise than the schoolmen of succeeding times, and were for the most part entirely free from that interminable play of an idle logic, and those empty metaphysical subtleties. The natural sciences were then in too low and feeble a state to form any distinct branch of human inquiry; and this very circumstance contributed, as was then indeed perfectly natural, to knit closer the ties which connected philosophy with theology. But independently of the peculiar circumstances of those times, it is evident that Christian philosophy can be founded on religion only, and not on any theory, wherein nature occupies the first and highest place—not on any doctrine, which contains the germ of a Pagan worship of nature, renewed under a scientific form. As little can a Christian philosophy rest on the principle of Individualism—a reason which submits not humbly to God and his revelation, but which, all concentrated in itself, aspires to be all-sufficing and all-creative. In either respect, the Stagyrite, when studied even in the original, and thoroughly understood, would have been a guide very unsafe, very likely to mislead, as well in natural philosophy as in the higher problems of Metaphysics. The best and most instructive

of his writings, his ethical or political works, could not even be understood by those scholastic admirers of the Grecian sage; for the profound allusions they contained to the customs and political history of Greece made the knowledge of these, and a complete investigation of the original sources of information, absolutely necessary to their comprehension. Even his logical and rhetorical books derive their chief and liveliest interest from the fact that they were intended to remedy the dialectic malady of Grecian intellect, and to oppose the all-usurping influence of a false rhetoric among the Greeks. Lastly, to comprehend fully, rightly appreciate, and turn to advantage, as our times are enabled to do, the most solid works of the profound ancient—those on mixed physics and natural history, the schoolmen were entirely destitute of the necessary aids and preparatory information.

If the Christian philosophers of the middle age, instead of adopting the Aristotelian system, had built and improved on the philosophy of those first great original thinkers of Christian Europe already mentioned, or on the philosophy of the primitive fathers, even those of the Latin church, for by them also the Platonic doctrines (the only doctrines of antiquity at all reconcileable with a philosophy of revelation,) had long been planted and naturalized on the Christian soil;—if this had been the case, the edifice of Christian philosophy would have been raised with far greater ease and rapidity, and been

wrought into a much more beautiful structure. Or if even the Greek originals had been deemed absolutely indispensable towards such an object, it had been better that, instead of waiting till the destruction of Constantinople, the powerful Emperors and Potentates, who patronized art and science, had, during the short duration of the Latin Empire at Constantinople, brought away with them those philological treasures, instead of the works of Aristotle so absurdly disfigured in the Arabic, and in the still more unintelligible Latin version. It was, on one hand, the inclination of the age to absolute modes of thinking, to the art of logical tournaments, and on the other, a hope, secretly entertained, that by the pretended magical power of these logical devices, one might learn and obtain the mastery of many profound secrets of nature (which by the way should have been sought anywhere but in the real Aristotle); finally, the unquenchable thirst after a fruit of knowledge, deemed forbidden — it was all these circumstances, which created now that universal and irresistible rage for Aristotle, reputed as he was to contain the very essence of all liberal science and philosophy.

The whole foundation of the scholastic philosophy was thoroughly and essentially false; and it had the most prejudicial and injurious influence, not only on theology, but on the whole spirit and modes of thinking of this age. When however the evil appeared nearly incu-

rable, and the false current of opinion was too strong to be resisted, a mighty service was rendered to mankind, when acute and sagacious theologians, endowed with philosophical talents and discernment, like a St. Thomas Aquinas, adopting the common, but erroneous, basis of this old Aristotelian rationalism, founded on it a system in which they attempted to reconcile this philosophy with the dictates of faith, and thus, in this respect at least, avert from their age the dangerous consequences of this false direction of the human mind. Yet, on the whole, this was but an apparent reconciliation; and the scholastic philosophy, or in other words, the rationalism of the middle age, broke out often afterwards into a haughty and violent opposition to the doctrines of revelation.

This scholastic spirit of the now degenerate middle age exerted its pernicious influence on life itself, and on the sciences more immediately connected with life, particularly jurisprudence. For when the first Ghibelline Frederick, on the plains of Roncaglia, gave his solemn sanction to the Roman law, and to all those absolute rights and prerogatives of the crown which were thence to be deduced, he thereby opened a door to an intricate scholastic jurisprudence, to all the learned subtlety of processes, and the interminable logic of law; and conferred on mankind a boon as little propitious as the Arabic Aristotle, which his descendant, the second Frederick, afterwards brought into Europe. The vast pan-

dects of Justinian were already the recognized code of laws, under the Eastern Franconian Emperors, long before the German Jurist Irnerius opened his school of civil law in the University of Bologna. Those old Roman Formulas of universal dominion which are occasionally to be found in the Corpus Juris, suited perfectly the spirit and policy of the Ghibelline Emperors, who, in particular cases, alleged them against the Greek Emperors and other Potentates, as clear proofs of the universal monarchy which appertained to them. But it was particularly from the Ghibelline period that the Roman law became a favourite science, and its study a new mania among the European nations, especially on account of the leaning to absolute principles in that system of jurisprudence, whose artificial forms of rigid law were indeed little congenial to the spirit of Christianity, to modern society, and German manners.

The true problem for the legal science of Christian Europe to solve would have been this —to adopt the forms of the old Roman jurisprudence, so highly wrought and finished in its way, and to reform its spirit by the doctrines and principles of Christian justice; and at the same time to employ the many excellent materials to be found in the native laws of European nations, and in all the old Germanic codes. These laws were indeed of a very local nature, adapted mostly to infant communities and the simple manners of warlike tribes, and by no means appropriate

to a more advanced stage of civilization; yet they contained the solid substance of genuine freedom and exalted equity. But this task ought to have been accomplished in that earlier period when Christianity, which had united and harmonized so many discordant elements, had still retained all its influence — an influence which was afterwards wanting. Those ages, however, which were so thoroughly Christian, and on that very account of such political importance, were deficient in science; and hence, as I have already observed, it was not so much deliberate selfishness, or hostile opposition, but the real want of knowledge and foresight which occasioned the civil and political institutions of Christian states to be left imperfect. It is only in very recent times that an attempt has been made to solve the problem which earlier ages had left unexecuted, or to supply this old deficiency of a Christian system of jurisprudence. And if hitherto this task has never been adequately, or completely, accomplished, though all the conditions have long existed for the solution of this necessary problem of European society; it would not be right to defer again the execution of the work, and thus lose once more the seasonable moment.

How, after the struggle of parties had become more general, and an absolute mode of thinking the ruling character of the age, the violent contests between church and state, between the Secular and Ecclesiastical authorities

tended to promote their mutual injury and destruction, I shall now endeavour briefly to state. After the last excommunication pronounced against Frederick II., one anti-emperor had followed another in succession; and German princes, a prince of the royal household of England, and a king of Castile, had filled successively the imperial throne; none were generally and legally recognized, and it was the reign of universal anarchy and savage club-law. It was a dark interregnum in social order, as if the sun of justice and of peace had withdrawn its light from a world of corruption and irreconcilable hate; and for a whole generation this state of wild disorder, and fear of still greater calamities, lasted. The loss of Jerusalem and all the Holy Land to the Christians, which now took place, added to the general gloom of the times.

In vain had St. Lewis in his last Crusade against Egypt, once more exerted all his energies for the deliverance and preservation of the Christian possessions in the East; possessions, which had they been retained, might in the end have formed a rampart and a barrier against the inroads of the Mussulman power into the adjoining provinces of Europe. Still the danger from this quarter was not so imminent; for it was not till a hundred years later that the Turks burst from Asia Minor into Europe, conquered the Northern provinces of the Byzantine Empire, and began to menace the Christian

kingdoms of the West. But there was a nearer and mightier danger rolling on against Europe —the formidable power of the Moguls, which surprised it in this period of the great interregnum. As if the hostile spirit of destruction had anticipated or known that the power of Christendom could be subverted only by internal discord; an old sage or priest of the still Pagan Moguls, had, about a generation before, announced to the youth, who was afterwards called Zingis Khan, (that is to say lord of the world, and who is known by this name in history,) that in a vision, he had seen the Great Spirit, seated on his flaming throne, judge the nations of the earth, and that, by his decision, the dominion of the world had been allotted to the young Khan of the Moguls. Filled with this spirit, Zingis traversed the world with his countless hosts; conquered China, Thibet and Japan, subdued the Mussulman Empire of Carizme, and penetrated as far as the Caspian Sea. The conqueror's four sons continued the work which he had commenced, and divided the earth into four parts for their task of desolation. The one to whom was assigned the Western portion of the earth invaded Christendom with his innumerable squadrons; the throne of Rurick, the greatest Christian potentate in the North, was overturned; and for several centuries, Russia, incorporated with the government of Kipzak, groaned under the oppressive yoke of the Mogul sway. Poland was overrun by the all-wasting

hosts of Moguls; the King of Hungary was defeated, and forced to flee his country; Silesia was laid waste, and the bloody discomfiture of the Christian army at Lignitz filled the whole Western world with consternation. Happily the destroyers penetrated no further into Europe; and the stream of their conquests, as if diverted by a protecting hand, took its course first towards the Arabian Caliphate of Bagdad, which they put an end to; and afterwards towards India, and other Asiatic and Mahometan countries. This was a passing, but awful, warning to Christendom, how much she needed the strong arm of a powerful Protector, and that union alone would enable her to resist the assaults and inroads of barbarous nations. It was the strong feeling of such a necessity which had first inspired the idea of the Western Empire.

In the German Empire order was first restored by Rodolph of Hapsburgh, who, notwithstanding his earldom of Alsace and his other hereditary demesnes in the Alps, had not yet so much power as many other aspirants to the imperial crown; but his chivalrous virtues ranked him high in the estimation of many of the princes. A happy and singular coincidence of accidental circumstances occasioned his unexpected election to the empire, which appeared to him, as to many others, a calling from above. Being on the most peaceful understanding with the Pope, he yet abandoned his expedition to

Rome; for he was, above all things, anxious to put an end to anarchy, to establish the public tranquillity on a solid basis, and, as far as was then possible, to restore the reign of justice. The high services which by this he rendered to his country in those distracted times, History has not been backward to acknowledge; and, as the Patriarch of the imperial house of Hapsburgh, he has been the founder of a power which, in succeeding ages, has ever proved a pillar of strength and security to Germany and even Europe. But often again did anarchy rear her head, and often did disorder obtain the ascendant in Germany, as well as in other European states. Nations felt the want of one mighty, independent, and protecting power — they lamented the decline of those Christian principles which had knit so closely all the ties of public and private life; and they saw with regret the gradual approach of the general dissolution and mighty ruin of European society. Under Rodolph's successors, down to Maximilian and Charles the Fifth, the Emperors were confined in their sphere of action to Germany and its internal affairs, which do not here immediately concern us. The expeditions to Rome tended, indeed, to keep alive the remembrance of the old imperial rights and claims; but they were productive of no permanent advantage, nor real extension of power. It was only in the summoning of general councils (the want of which was soon so urgently felt for the well-being of

the church and of Christendom), that the imperial power was really exerted in favour of the general interests of Europe.

But the evils which ensued to the church and its head, from its unhappy conflict with the temporal power, were far more extensive and fatal in their consequences. In the mighty contests between the Popes and Emperors, it was actual right which was the subject of dispute; and, in truth, the first basis and highest principle of all right in Christian states, and indeed in all human society; and however much of error the exaggerations of later times may have infused into these disputes, it was a sublime idea which animated either party. In France, which now took up that attitude of hostility towards the head of the church which the Emperors had once assumed, an entirely new era in European policy, which had now ceased to be Christian, commenced with the reign of Philip-le-bel. In the place of those great motives and lofty ideas which animated a Gregory VII., on the one hand, and a Conrad or Barbarossa, on the other, we meet with a vulgar policy, a selfish cupidity, and an unworthy cunning. In every point of view, Philip the Fair may be considered as the worthy predecessor of Louis XI. Even his conduct towards the whole order of Templars, their execution, or rather judicial murder, for the purpose of confiscation, was a deed of violence which nothing could justify; even had the suspicion entertained against the more corrupt

portion of the order, of having introduced from the East certain unchristian tenets, rites and practices, been not entirely destitute of foundation. But yet this suspicion did not affect the whole body, nor even the then worthy grand-master, as was shortly afterwards acknowledged by the King of Portugal and the Pope himself; and, in any case, an ecclesiastical affair of so much importance ought to have been investigated and determined by a mode of procedure very different from this arbitrary and despotic course.

The untimely exaggerations and absolute pretensions of Boniface VIII., which, though Papal, may almost be termed *Ghibelline* (in the same sense that we have applied that term to the acts of preceding emperors), must have proved very welcome to Philip the Fair. He found in the conduct of the Pope, a pretext for enticing him into France, in order, on the first vacancy in the Holy See, to promote the election of a Pope favourable to his views, and fix him at Avignon. It was a deep-laid plan of policy on his part, to fix the residence of the Popes for ever within his territories, in order more easily to extort their consent to all his selfish projects, as in the case of the Templars; a policy by which the Popes, during seventy years, were kept in a state of absolute dependance on the court of France. And when at last one of the Popes succeeded in rescuing the chair of Peter from this Babylonish captivity,

and placing it again at Rome, Popes were elected one against the other at Rome and Avignon; and a schism broke out in the church which lasted for forty years, till it was finally quelled by the general council of Constance. A deeper wound could not have been inflicted on Christianity than this division in the church, which led minds astray, and introduced an indescribable confusion in all the relations of public and private life. As, without the all-protecting and all-connecting authority of the first Christian Emperors, Europe in general, and Germany in particular, would much sooner have been split and dismembered, and been deprived of all power of permanent resistance against foreign aggression, and barbarian inroads; so, without the Papal power, which was founded on, and adapted for, unity, and which held together the fabric of the church, Christianity would very soon have been lost and extinguished in a multitude of particular sects, petty congregations, and opposite parties, even where totally dissimilar systems of religion did not spring up. The maintenance of orthodoxy in the Greek church, where the Patriarch does not possess the same spiritual power, nor the same extensive influence on society, as the Pope during the middle ages, cannot be fairly adduced as an objection to the truth of this observation. For it would be absurd to expect from the active, stirring, restless, and animated spirit of the Western nations, moving on as they did through

a series of rapid, incessant, and progressive changes, that innate monotony of thought even in faith, which was natural to the dead, torpid Byzantine mind. When the Western church had been weakened and convulsed by the conflict with the secular power, the prejudicial and fatal effects of this contest became apparent in religion itself and the internal region of faith. At first, indeed, there arose a mighty moral power of resistance against the growing corruption and the impending evil—a great spiritual remedy, which sprang out of religion, and was perfectly conformable to its spirit, It was here again apparent how that strengthening Spirit of aid and counsel—that Paraclete promised to the church by its divine Founder, knows at every period, and on every new occurrence of danger, to employ the remedies the best and most fitting for the exigences of the time; remedies of which the high origin is clearly discernible, though in the hands of men they no longer retain their primitive character, and do not accomplish all the good they might have effected, or even become at last more and more perverted.

The great wealth of the church was not the sole, but one of the principal subjects of dispute with the secular power, and was even a stumbling-block to many, especially among the people. It was this wealth, indeed, which had furnished the means of cultivating and fertilizing the soil of Europe, and sowing the seeds of

science on the soil of human intellect; for the existence of the clergy had been founded on landed property, and by this means they had become naturalized and domiciliated in the state, and among the nation; till the splendid endowments which they received from the liberality of religious zeal, made the abbots, bishops, and the whole of the higher clergy, wealthy lords, senators, and princes. This wealth and this power, the clergy, especially in the earlier times, generally employed in a manner the most praiseworthy, and the most conducive to the welfare of the community. The annals of modern Europe, and the history of every great and petty state within it, are full of the high political services which the excellent churchmen of the middle age rendered to the public weal. This was universally acknowledged, and any sudden separation of the higher clergy from the state — any degradation of that body from the exalted station which they occupied therein, would have been a most serious loss to society. In the contests of the emperors and other princes with the church and its head, the immediate and original object of dispute was not ecclesiastical property, which no one ever dreamed of attacking; but the jurisdiction over that property, and the acknowledgment of that jurisdiction. It is easy to conceive that all the members of the higher clergy had not rendered services equally eminent, and that the employment of their riches had not been equally

laudable and blameless. But, independently of individual abuses and scandals, the great wealth of the dignified clergy, the eminent and splendid rank they occupied in the state and in society, were ever a stumbling-block to the people, and even to some ecclesiastics, and seemed in contradiction with the original rule and evangelical poverty of the primitive Christians. This was the first cause, the principal subject, and, as it were, the favourite text of that popular opposition which now, after the example had been set by princes and potentates, began to unfurl its banners against the church.

Nothing therefore could be better adapted to the exigences of the age than that, in opposition to the too great worldly pomp of many of the high though meritorious and virtuous dignitaries of that time, communities of men, animated by the sincerest piety, and the most austere spirit of humility and self-denial, should have arisen to make themselves all in all to the people, and set the example of perfect evangelical poverty; or to devote their undivided zeal to popular instruction and the office of preaching. Men of real sanctity, and the most humble piety, and gifted with wonderful powers, entered on this new path of religious zeal; and many amongst them, with a truly high-minded freedom, reprehended the abuses and the moral corruption then existing in church and state, and among all orders of society. They met with contradiction and opposition, and even at an early period

incurred much blame; but here we must be careful to distinguish human infirmity and partial degeneracy from the holy origin of those establishments—from that spark of divine inspiration which called these, and all other ecclesiastical institutes, into existence. And thus that tide of popular opposition to the church, which had received its first impulse from the secular power, and the contests of the Ghibelline Emperors, rolled on with an ever increasing force, swell, and violence. Scarce had the Waldenses disappeared, when a religious sect still more numerous, the Albigenses—broke out in the South of France, and not content with displaying the usual popular opposition to the riches and real abuses of the church, broached many errors and doctrines of the Eastern sects, which during the Crusades may have found their way into that country. For this reason it was thought justifiable to proclaim against them a formal Crusade, and, by a most atrocious war of extermination, wherein the remedy appears no less reprehensible than the evil itself, princes put down this popular sect, which they regarded as rebellious not only against the church, but the state itself.

Wickliffe in England was the first single bold Reformer that appeared, and he was succeeded soon afterwards by an Innovator, whose enterprise was attended with far more important consequences—John Huss in Bohemia. Their writings, abounding not only in the wonted con-

demnation of real abuses, but in many fanciful doctrines, unfounded assertions, and germs of heresy, their cause as well as the general state of affairs, and the problem of the age, became more complicated and perilous.

John Huss was summoned before the council of Constance, which had terminated so successfully the schism in the Papacy; but there, without any regard to the imperial safe-conduct which he had received, he was condemned, and delivered over to capital punishment. As one injustice, one act of bloody severity, is sure to bring on another, a few years afterwards the Senators of Prague were precipitated from a window. This was the signal for a general rising of the people; Ziska, at the head of his infuriated troops, ravaged Bohemia, burst into the neighbouring provinces of Germany, and, with a Hussite army of seventy thousand men, spread terror every where on his march. This insurrection was indeed suppressed, but Europe grew every day more and more ripe for a Revolution.

A new and pressing danger, which had been long foreseen, now threatened Europe from an opposite quarter. The Turks, who for almost a century had been in possession of the Northern provinces of the Byzantine Empire, became now masters of Constantinople, and the old church of St. Sophia was converted into a Mosque. That portion of Europe which stood in most immediate danger, — Germany, Austria, Hungary

and Poland—was now compelled to make, for the space of more than two centuries, resistance to the progress of the Turkish power the object of its most assiduous attention; and this was a circumstance which tended to impede the emperors in all their other enterprises, to divert their efforts, and consume their best energies, and so far, in the then existing embarrassments in church and state, exerted a very fatal influence on the whole system of European society.

The immediate effects of the siege and fall of Constantinople were highly favourable to literature and science in the last half of the fifteenth century; when the Greek fugitives, by the rich and long-lost treasures of classical knowledge which they brought, created a new and brilliant era in letters and science; in Italy in the first instance, then in Germany (at that time so closely connected with Italy), and lastly in the rest of Europe. The knowledge of their classical tongue and ancient literature had never been totally extinguished among the Greek scholars and ecclesiastics; but in their hands this knowledge remained a mere dead treasure, which was only afterwards turned to profitable account, and to the service of society, by the more active spirit of the Europeans.

The better of the late Byzantine Emperors, particularly some of the Palæologi, had cultivated the sciences, and, by their love and encouragement of learning, had given a new life to literature. Even in the period immediately

preceding the fall and conquest of Constantinople, many Greeks had taken refuge in Italy, particularly during the various attempts made to bring about the re-union of the Greek with the Roman church; — attempts, however, which with the exception of a small number of individuals who went over to the Catholic church, were not attended with any general success. In Italy the Greek fugitives established schools for their own language and literature, and founded libraries; and if in the time of Petrarch few Italians could be named that were conversant with that language and literature, (and among these zealous promoters of Greek learning, Boccaccio must be included with himself,) Florence now under the Medici, the first Cosmo, and Lorenzo the Great, became a flourishing seminary of Grecian letters and erudition; and at Rome also, the house of Cardinal Bessarion was a true Platonic academy of science. Even the study of the ancient Roman writers received a new stimulus, and was prosecuted with a more classical taste and spirit. Courtly literati, and Latin poets formed on the old classical models— political writers in the Latin tongue, which was still the language of diplomacy—statesmen and politicians of the greatest influence, trained up in the school of Greek and Roman history and politics — and polite dilettanti of Pagan antiquity,—all now gave the tone to this new and second epoch in the intellectual culture of Europe. But the ruling spirit and tone of the

age proceeded mainly from the revival of the ancient literature and learning of the Greeks. Natural philosophy, whatever extension it may have received from the improvements in astronomy, and a more comprehensive knowledge of the globe obtained by the discovery of the New World, had not yet been wrought into a scientific form, capable of exerting, as it did afterwards, an effective influence on the European mind, or of giving it a new direction. In this period of the restoration of science, some individuals, like Picus Mirandola, and above all, the German Reuchlin, followed a Platonic track in search of a more profound philosophy; or, like Bessarion, Marsilius Ficinus and others, illustrated and diffused the philosophy of Plato. But these were partial exceptions, and these first attempts were not always faultless. Yet it must ever be a matter of regret that the beginning then made towards a better and more profound philosophy should have been left unfinished. To this the old scholastic philosophy was then a powerful obstacle, and the spirit of anarchy, which the religious contests of the following age called into existence, struck at the root of all lofty speculation; and even in the flourishing age of the Medici, it was the æsthetic part of ancient literature, and the political application of classical knowledge, which formed the main and almost exclusive object of pursuit.

Thus this regeneration, as it was called,

was very imperfect and incomplete; and, in a general sense, was really not such;—even in science itself, the advantages which mankind had obtained, and which they were so eager to display, were more like a passing blossom, than a sound and vigorous root. Many of those classical spirits were more conversant and more at home in ancient Rome and Athens, in the manners, history, politics of antiquity, or even in its mythology (then investigated with peculiar fondness and enthusiasm), than in their own age, in the existing relations of society, or in the doctrines and principles of Christianity.

The prevailing character of this new epoch of intellectual cultivation, which succeeded to the scholastico-romantic period of European art and science, was by those modes of thinking and those modes of life, which, with more or less modification and variety, it diffused over all the European countries; at the best a very partial enthusiasm for Pagan antiquity, not merely in the department of art, but in the whole compass of literature, nay even in history, politics, and morals also. If we compare with the fearful commotions of the following age this classical enthusiasm, often so ill suited to the existing relations of society; its influence on the world will appear like an enchanting draught, which intoxicated for a while the European nations, drew them after objects totally foreign, made

them forget themselves in an illusive consciousness of their intellectual refinement, and lulling them into a false security, blinded them to their own corruption, and the greatness of the impending danger — the yawning abyss on whose verge they then stood.

END OF LECTURE XIV.

LECTURE XV.

General observations on the Philosophy of History. — On the corrupt state of society in the fifteenth century.—Origin of Protestantism, and character of the times of the Reformation.

The Philosophy of History—that is to say, the right comprehension of its wonderful course, the solution and illustration of its mighty problems, and of the complex enigmas of humanity, and its destiny in the lapse of ages—is not to be found in isolated events, or detached historical facts, but in the principles of social progress. Historical particulars can only serve to characterize the inward motives, the prevailing opinions, the decisive moments, the critical points in the progress of human society; and thus place more vividly before our eyes the peculiar character of every age—each step of mankind in intellectual refinement and moral improvement. To this end, historical details are

indispensable; for the ruling principles of social developement are of a more exalted kind, and not mere organic laws of nature, from which as in physiology, when the first principle of the disorder is well understood, we can accurately deduce and partly, at least determine beforehand, the nature of the different phenomena and symptoms, the rule of health, the diagnostic of the disease, as well as the method of cure, the approach of the crisis, and its natural declension, without being obliged to go through the labyrinth of all the different cases that may have ever existed. Again, it is not in the history of man, as in natural history, where the structure of the various plants and animals forms by close analogy one connected system of species and genera; and where the growth, bloom, decay and extinction of individuals follow in an uniform order, like day and night, or like the change of the seasons. But in the sphere of human freedom; as man is a natural creature, but a natural creature endowed with free-will, that is to say, with the faculty of moral determination between the good or heavenly impulse, and the wicked or hostile principle; all these organic laws of nature form only the physical basis of his progress and history. And hardly do they form this—but rather a mere disposition of which the direction depends on man, or on the use he makes of his own freedom. It is only when that higher principle of man's free-will has been weakened, debased, obscured, extin-

guished, and utterly confounded, that those laws of nature can hold good in history. Then indeed the symptoms of a diseased age, the organic vices of a nation, the prognostics of a general crisis of the world may be determined to a certain extent with the precision of medical science. Though the general feelings of mankind clearly declare the soul to be endowed with the faculty of free-will; yet to reason, this freedom is an almost inextricable enigma, the solution of which must be furnished by faith. Or rather this is a mystery, of which the key and explanation must be sought for in God and his Revelation; and the same will apply to every higher principle, that transcends nature, and nature's laws.

Along with the principle of man's free-will which rises above necessity, that law of nature —there is another higher and divine principle in the historical progress of nations; and this is the visible guidance of an all-loving and all-ruling Providence displayed in the course of history, and the march of human destiny, whether in things great or small. But the power of evil is something more than a mere power of nature, and in comparison with this, it is a power of a higher and more spiritual kind. It is that power whose influence is not only felt in the sensual inclinations of nature, but which under the mask of a false liberty, unceasingly labours to rob man of his true freedom. Thus Providence is not a mere vague notion, a formula of belief, or a feeling of virtuous antici-

pation—a mere pious conjecture—but it is the real, effective, historical, redeeming power of God, which restores to man, and the whole human race their lost freedom, and with it the effectual power of good. The problem of human existence consists in this, that man in the great stage of history, as in the little details of private life, has to choose and determine between a true heavenly freedom, ever faithful and steadfast to God, and the false, rebellious freedom of a will separated from God. The mere licence of passion or of sensual appetite is no liberty, but a stern bondage under the yoke of nature. But as that false and criminal freedom is spiritual, so it is superior to nature; and it is strictly conformable to truth, to regard him as the first author of this false liberty, whom revelation represents as the mightiest, the most potent, and the most intellectual egotist among all created beings either in the visible or invisible world.

Without this freedom of choice innate in man or imparted to him,—this faculty of determining between the divine impulse and the suggestions of the spirit of evil, there would be no history, and without a faith in such a principle, there could be no Philosophy of History. If free-will were a mere psychological illusion; if consequently man were incapable of sentiment or deliberate action; if all in life were predetermined by necessity, and subject, like nature, to a blind, immutable destiny; in that case, what we call history, or the description of

mankind, would merely constitute a branch of natural science. But such notions are utterly repugnant to the general belief and the most intimate feelings of mankind, according to which, it is precisely the conflict between the good or divine principle on the one hand, and the evil or adverse principle on the other, which forms the purport of human life and human history, from the beginning to the end of time. Without the idea of a God-head regulating the course of human destiny, of an all-ruling Providence, and the saving and redeeming power of God; the history of the world would be a labyrinth without an outlet—a confused pile of ages buried upon ages—a mighty tragedy without a right beginning, or a proper ending; and this melancholy and tragical impression is produced on our minds by several of the great ancient historians, particularly the profoundest of them all, —Tacitus, who towards the close of antiquity, glances so dark a retrospect upon the past.

But the greatest historical mystery — the deepest and most complicated enigma of the world, is the permission of evil on the part of God, which can find its explanation and solution only in the unfettered freedom of man, in the destination of the latter for a state of struggle, exposed to the influences of two contending powers, and which commences with the first earthly mission of Adam. This is nothing else but the real and entire exercise,—the divinely ordained trial of the faculty of freedom, in-

parted to the firstling of the new creation,— the image of God, in the conflict and the victory over temptation, and all hostile spirits. That man only who recognizes the permission of God given to evil in its at first inconceivably wide extent—the whole magnitude of the power permitted to the wicked principle, according to the inscrutable decrees of God, from the curse of Cain—and the sign of that curse—its unimpeded transmission through all the labyrinths of error, and truth grossly disfigured—through all the false religions of Heathenism,—all the ages of extreme moral corruption, and eternally repeated, and ever increasing crime, down to the period when the anti-christian principle—the spirit of evil shall usurp entire dominion of the world; when mankind sufficiently prepared, shall be summoned to the last decisive trial—the last great conflict with the enemy in all the fulness of his power: — that man only we say, is capable of understanding the great phenomena of universal history in their often strange and dark complexity, as far at least as human eye can penetrate into those hidden and mysterious ways of Providence. But he who regards every thing in humanity, and the progress of humanity, in a mere natural or rationalist point of view, and will explain everything by such views; who though perhaps not without a certain instinctive feeling of an all-ruling Providence—a certain pious deference for its secret ways and high designs, yet is devoid of a full

knowledge of, and deep insight into, the conduct of Providence—he to whom the power of evil is not clear, evident, and fully intelligible; he will ever rest on the surface of events and historical facts, and satisfied with the outward appearance of things, neither comprehend the meaning of the whole, nor understand the import of any part. But the matter of greatest moment is to watch the Spirit of God, revealing itself in history, enlightening and directing the judgments of men, saving and conducting mankind, and even here below admonishing, judging and chastising nations and generations; to watch this Spirit in its progress through all ages, and discern the fiery marks and traces of its footsteps. This three-fold law of the world—these three mighty principles in the historical progress of mankind — the hidden ways of a Providence delivering and emancipating the human race—next the free-will of man, doomed to a decisive choice in the struggle of life, and every action and sentiment springing from that freedom — lastly the power permitted by God to the evil principle, cannot be deduced as things absolutely necessary, like the phenomena of nature, or the laws of human reason. Such a general deduction would by no means answer the object intended; but it is in the characteristic marks of particular events and historical facts, that the visible traces of invisible power and design, or of high and hidden wisdom must be sought for. And hence the

Philosophy of History is not a theory standing apart and separated from history—but its results must be drawn out of the multitude of historical facts—from the faithful records of ages, and must spring up, as it were, of themselves, from bare observation. And here an unprejudiced mind will discern the motive, and also, the justification of the course we have pursued; for in the Philosophy of History, we have not to do with any system—any series of abstract notions, positions, and conclusions, as in the construction of a mere theory—but with the general principles only of historical investigation and historical judgment.

In the multitude, however, of historical phenomena, all things, especially in times of great party-conflicts, are of a mixed nature, where in the selection of characteristic traits, we should rather avoid than seek for any rude and violent contrasts. For while on the one hand, in any great historical contest, we are bound to recognize the full justice of the true cause, yet on the other, we shall often find some flaw—some stain—some weak point connected with that cause—not inherent in the cause itself, but chargeable solely on human infirmity. Or when we must condemn the Revolution of any period, as pernicious in its general relations, and reprehensible in itself, we shall often see some motive lie concealed in its origin—in its first proceedings, which taken in itself, and abstractedly of subsequent errors, and the false consequences thence

deduced, comprises some important indications of right — some lofty aspirations after truth. Every general assertion must be restricted by exceptions, and qualified by various modifications; and as in historical events, so in historical narration and speculation, nothing is so hurtful and unprofitable as an absolute mode of reflection, enquiry, and decision. This remark we may apply by anticipation to the whole period of latter ages, and as inculcating the necessity of that conciliatory spirit, which true philosophy cannot fail of adopting for its rule. It is only when we have gone very deeply into the varied and complex nature of the circumstances of any age, and examined in their manifold bearings those historical phenomena which attend or produce the critical turning-points, the decisive eras of history, that we can clearly discover the spiritual elements—the great ideas which lie at the bottom of a mighty revolution in society. In every other abstract science, an exception from the rule appears a contradiction —but in the science of history, every real exception serves but the better to make us comprehend and judge the rest.

Such an exception I have now to point out in reference to my remarks on the intellectual progress of Europe, in those two epochs of its mental cultivation, one of which I designated as the scholastico-romantic era, the other as the era of enthusiasm for the Pagan antique; the former being inadequate to the wants of that

age, as well as of posterity, and the other secretly destructive of the old Christian order of things. But on the whole, from the tone prevalent in either period, I do not know I could have otherwise characterized the spirit peculiar to those two epochs. Yet even in those periods, and in the sphere of philosophic and religious meditation, the spirit of Christianity showed itself independent of, and superior to the temper of the times; and between these opposite eras, we meet with works displaying a clear and beautiful simplicity of expression, united with the utmost purity and depth of ascetic feelings. Among several others, I need only cite the German Thomas a Kempis, whose most celebrated work has become a manual of devotion for all the European nations, while those who know the philosophic spirit which reigns in his other writings, can well recognize in this the same clear masterly mind, which throwing off the abstruse forms of the school, pours itself forth in a most lovely simplicity of diction.

I may be permitted to cite this glorious exception of a mind, that amid the degenerate science of that age, rose into the pure atmosphere of Christian philosophy, inasmuch as it serves to throw a light on the general spirit of the times. Had that mild light of moral truth and divine charity not been then so rare an exception; had that spirit of Christian morality been somewhat more widely diffused; the violent commotions in the following generation

would not have occurred; for they would have had no motive, nor object, nor any possible source of existence. But in direct opposition to that pious Fleming, there was a great Italian writer, who gave the tone to the moral and political opinions of his age, and exerted the mightiest influence on his times, both as a moralist and as a politician. I allude to Machiavelli, who may serve as a proof, that the maxims and principles of Pagan antiquity, with which the scholars of that age were imbued, were not confined to the departments of art and of imagination, or of mere erudition, but had a very powerful influence on politics: and however much one may attempt to excuse, or explain away the design of one of his works,* still all his other political writings clearly and evidently shew that he was actuated by no other maxims of state-policy than the old Roman and Pagan principle, of grasping, inexorable, and selfish cunning. This writer announced only with greater clearness and precision what were already the prevailing principles of his times, and was thus the means of bringing those principles to fulness and maturity.

When the Christian bond of union between the European states and nations had been so completely dissevered, policy, together with all moral principle, became for the most part Pagan, came to consider all means as lawful for its

* The Prince.

ends, respected not the sacredness of any institution, and was guided in all its projects by selfishness, cupidity, or ambition. Animated with this spirit, and guided by these views, Lewis XI. consolidated the absolute authority of the crown in the interior of his dominions, with the same inflexible perseverance of character, and the same consummate political art, which in his endeavours to maintain his power against the Duke of Burgundy and other neighbours, characterized his foreign policy. In Ferdinand the Catholic, King of Spain, who permanently united the two kingdoms of Arragon and Castile, put an end to the Arab dominion by the conquest of Granada, and came into possession of the golden mines of America; the arbitrary principles of policy and of government, which were then so generally prevalent, are particularly perceptible. The barbarous persecution, and the expulsion of the Jews from Spain, was certainly prejudicial to the welfare of the country, was in itself an act of reprehensible severity, and was, above all, a dangerous precedent for the further extension and application of the same oppressive policy towards the Arabian population (still very numerous in many provinces of Spain), and towards the peaceable descendants of the old Mahomedan conquerors. From the contests carried on in Spain itself, with the Mahomedans for the space of eight centuries, a religious war almost entered into the system of national policy. The wisdom of a great and lenient monarch, like

Charles the Fifth, might indeed mitigate the evils of the times, and as long as he lived, and as far as circumstances permitted, might oppose a check to the torrent of the new opinions in Germany. But with all his pacific endeavours he was unable either to prevent the rupture and separation of a part of Germany, or to stop the progress of arbitrary principles of government, which under his successor on the Spanish throne, became perfectly irresistible. The intermixture of political and ecclesiastical affairs and institutions existed more or less everywhere, and in truth had a deep historical foundation in the peculiar circumstances of place; and unless we deeply investigate all the particulars of those local circumstances, and accurately discriminate their several peculiarities, it would be difficult, and indeed rash to pronounce a general opinion respecting them—as so sweeping a judgment would give a false and erroneous turn to a censure apparently well-founded, and often just in itself. The Inquisition in Spain for instance, was from the very peculiar character which it took in that country, far more a political than an ecclesiastical institute. If the secular power had been guilty of arbitrary and violent encroachments on ecclesiastical jurisdiction, ecclesiastical power in its turn had from the spirit of the times become in many respects too secular.

When the Popes had returned to Rome from the captivity of Avignon, experience taught

them how necessary to their dignity and independence was the possession of a sovereign principality, which however inconsiderable, should be at least free from foreign controul. Nay, since the German Empire had become really extinct, or existed only in name, it was the interest of the secular powers themselves, that the political authority of the Pope within the ecclesiastical states should rest on a firm and secure foundation, and should thus afford them a guarantee that the sovereign Pontiff would not again be in a state of exclusive dependance on any one of the different powers—divided as they now all were in interests, and animated by mutual jealousy. Without taking into account the personal scandals of Alexander VI., the mode in which some Popes, especially of the Borgia family, sought to consolidate their power within the ecclesiastical territory, must have appeared very revolting in the spiritual heads of Christendom. And although Julius II. possessed many great and princely qualities; still an injurious impression must have been produced on the public and popular mind, when the chief ecclesiastic, and a prince of peace girded on the sword, and put on the martial cuirass. The name of the Medicean Pope, Leo X., is one celebrated in the history of art and science, and serves to denote its most brilliant era; he possessed perhaps all the qualities most calculated to shed lustre round the throne of a secular monarch; but he was not

the Pontiff to discern the fearful dangers and urgent necessities of the church in that age, to avert those dangers by his foresight, or to surmount them by conciliation.

A succession of such Pontiffs immediately prior to the breaking out of the Reformation, is of no slight historical importance. It would really appear as if the church were destined, by the losses it experienced, to learn the greatness of the danger to which its too worldly policy exposed it, and to be brought back by misfortune to its true, proper, and essential destination. Indeed at that time, the materials of political combustion were by no means wanting in Italy. Even in the absence of the Popes, a political fanatic, Rienzi, had excited a Revolution for the purpose of restoring the ancient Republic; and the internal feuds and civil wars of Florence were the effects of factions, almost inseparable from a state constituted like the Florentine Republic. In the last period of civil disorder, shortly after Lorenzo's death, a religious fanatic, the Dominican Savanarola—appeared at the head of a political Revolution; and his revolutionary principles were strangely mixed up with his religious tenets. Here evidently is a fact not undeserving of attention, if we would wish to form a right estimate of the state and circumstances of that age—it is that the very origin of this new species of fanaticism or heresy, and not its ulterior progress (as in the case of the Hussites,) was marked and

accompanied by political commotions, and crimes against the state.

When that bond of religious unity—that high fellowship of Christian feeling which had united the various states of Christendom, was in a great measure dissolved, the different powers of Europe (as is usually the case among neighbouring independent nations, when directed by separate views of policy) the different powers of Europe engaged in a system of alliances subject to various fluctuations, but all formed on the principle of a mere dynamical equilibrium—just as if government and social power, even under the influence of Christianity, were nought but a mere material weight—a mere lever of physical force. Ever since the expedition of Charles VIII. into Italy had provoked resistance, and occasioned a re-action, the dominion of that country, for which Spain and France contended with all their might, was a peculiar subject of jealousy between those states, and gave rise to many wars. The other powers that took an active part in this game of political alliances—this system of the balance of power,—were Venice, the Emperor Maximilian, and the Pope. How very much an active participation in affairs of so worldly a nature was unbefitting the last-named potentate, I need not stop to observe. That conduct gave occasion afterwards to a great public scandal. For instance, when the Pope had formed an alliance with the King of France against Charles V.; and to resent this,

the Emperor's German army (among whom were a great many entertaining the opinions of Luther), had proceeded to the conquest of Rome; this was a fresh and mighty source of scandal at that momentous epoch. Nay, the great dissatisfaction of the Emperor with the conduct of some Popes (though this referred merely to their political acts), when coupled with his conciliatory conduct towards the German Protestants, induced many to question the sincerity of his attachment to the Catholic faith. However false and unfounded such a surmise might be, still all things contributed to foster the belief, and on all sides there was a concurrence of circumstances to lead the public mind more and more astray.

The good and high-minded Emperor, Maximilian, who had meditated, and might have accomplished many other noble projects and important enterprises, was compelled to labour during his whole life, though in vain, to discover in the total absence of all physical resources, some counterpoise to the power of France, and some barrier and security against the encroachments of Turkish ambition. But when fortune had placed on the head of Charles V. the united crowns of Spain and Burgundy, the necessity of choosing an Emperor, who like those of earlier ages, might be capable of coping with all the dangers of the times, was universally felt; and this feeling led to the election of Charles. But for this choice, the system of European states would

have fallen to pieces, and Christendom become a prey as well to foreign conquest as to internal anarchy. The mind of Charles was entirely occupied with the old idea of an universal Christian Empire, and a religious feeling was at the bottom of all his political schemes and enterprises. But whatever might be the extent of the countries over which he reigned, and whatever the apparent greatness of his power, yet amid the various designs he had to prosecute, and in the struggle he had to maintain against the combined array of so many hostile elements, he felt the want of those real resources which are to be found in a compact and well-united monarchy. To the Spanish crown he imparted great splendour, and even in Italy remained the master; but he met with very imperfect success in his efforts against Mohammedan power—a power from whose oppressions, and still further encroachments, it was the first duty of the Emperor, as the armed Protector of Christendom, to defend the European states. His conciliatory policy towards the German Protestants did not attain its object, for amid the general ferment of the age, the torrent of religious opinions bore down all before it. His wish to re-establish order in church and state by means of a general council, and thereby to consolidate anew the old foundations of faith, was fully accomplished only after his death.

In all that regards the origin and first breaking out of the Reformation, I wish to premise

that all controversy on points of dogma, all controversy on the merits or demerits of individuals, the worthiness or unworthiness of persons, does not enter into the plan of this work. My object is particularly to describe the various manner in which the religious revolution commenced in the three or four countries over which it exerted the most remarkable influence; as well as the dissimilar form which it finally assumed in each of those countries. I wish particularly to trace the influence of the reformation on the progress of Christian states, and on European literature and science; two things which constitute the main subject of the last chapters of this Philosophy of History. But we must notice briefly, and as far as is necessary to the elucidation of the subject, the point of connection existing between persons and doctrines, and the historical event which alone is the subject of our enquiries. In the first place, it is evident of itself, that a man who accomplished so mighty a Revolution in the human mind, and in his age, could have been endowed with no common powers of intellect, and no ordinary strength of character. Even his writings display an astonishing boldness and energy of thought and language, united with a spirit of impetuous, passionate, and convulsive enthusiasm. The latter qualities are not indeed very compatible with a prudent, enlightened, and dispassionate judgment. The opinion as to the use which was made of those high powers of

genius must of course vary with the religious principles of each individual; but the extent of those intellectual endowments themselves, and the strength and perseverance of character with which they were united, must be universally admitted. Many who did not adhere afterwards to the new opinions, still thought at the commencement of the Reformation, that Luther was the real man for his age, who had received a high vocation to accomplish the great work of regeneration, the strong necessity of which was then universally felt; for no well-thinking man then dreamed of a subversion of the ancient faith. If at this great distance of time, we pick out of the writings of this individual, many very harsh expressions, nay particular words, which are not only coarse, but absolutely gross, nothing of any moment can be proved or determined by such selections. Indeed the age in general, not only in Germany, but in other very highly civilized countries, was characterized by a certain coarseness in manners and language, and by a total absence of all excessive polish and over-refinement of character. But this coarseness would have been productive of no very destructive effects; for intelligent men well knew that the wounds of old abuses lay deep, and were ulcerated in their very roots; and no one was therefore shocked if the knife, destined to amputate abuses, cut somewhat deep. Luther acquired, too, the respect of princes, even of those opposed to him. Thus when shortly after

the commencement of the Reformation, a general insurrection of peasants broke out, which renewed all the excesses of the Hussites; Luther so far from exciting the rebels, like some of the new Gospellers, opposed them with all the powers of his commanding eloquence, and all the weight of his high authority; for he was by no means in politics an advocate for democracy, like Zuinglius and Calvin, but he asserted the absolute power of princes, though he made his advocacy subservient to his own religious views and projects. It was by such conduct, and the influence which he thereby acquired, as well as by the sanction of the civil power, that the Reformation was promoted and consolidated. Without this, Protestantism would have sunk into the lawless anarchy which marked the proceedings of the Hussites, and to which the war of the peasants rapidly tended; and it would inevitably have been suppressed, like all the earlier popular commotions—for under the latter form, Protestantism may be said to have sprung up several centuries before. And besides, none of the other heads and leaders of the new religious party had the power, or were in a situation to uphold the Protestant religion—its present existence is solely and entirely the work and the deed of one man, unique in his way, and who holds unquestionably a conspicuous place in the history of the world. Much was staked on the soul of that man, and this was in every respect a mighty and critical mo-

ment in the annals of mankind, and the march of time. The real problem for the age would have been to terminate this unhappy confusion of doctrines, that is to say, that disorder and not unfrequent confusion in the relations of the ecclesiastical and civil powers, (occasioned by the general state of things in Europe, and by the circumstances which first promoted the political and intellectual civilization of the West)—in a word, to compose the old dispute between church and state, and bring it to a just Christian settlement by a peaceful and amicable arrangement. Then the many existing, though scattered, rays of true Christian piety, humility, and self-denial, as well as the new discoveries in science would have acquired a more intense and more extended power—an event which was now entirely prevented by a great civil war between two religious parties, and was not brought to a full accomplishment till a much later period. But the total rejection of the traditions of the past (and here was the capital vice and error of this Revolution), rendered the evil incurable, and even for Biblical learning and philology now so highly valued, the true key of interpretation, which sacred tradition alone can furnish, was irretrievably lost, as the sequel has but too well proved. And even if this were not the case, how could mere learned institutes of Biblical philology, united with popular schools of morality, constitute the spirit and essence of a religion? This is no where so fully understood,

and so deeply felt, as in Protestant Germany at the present day — Germany, where lies the root of Protestantism, its mighty centre, its all-ruling spirit, its vital power, and its life-blood — Germany, where to supply the want of the true spirit of religion, a remedy is sought sometimes in the external forms of liturgy,* sometimes in the pompous apparatus of Biblical philology and research, destitute of the true key of interpretation †; sometimes in the empty philosophy of Rationalism, and sometimes in the mazes of a mere interior Pietism.

Undoubtedly even within the pale of Catholicism, we meet occasionally with individuals who adopt the same, or at least very similar systems, who either give in to the principle of Rationalism, or to a false theological illuminism (as in the recent period of Neology), or like some of the Jansenists, indulge in the unsafe and illusive suggestions of a sentimental mysticism. For the contests of two hostile parties will not always prevent the imitation of defects, and the contagion of errors; and this is only an additional reason, why in a work of this kind,

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* Schlegel here alludes to the Ordinances promulgated a few years ago by the King of Prussia, for the reform of the Protestant Liturgy.

† The author here refers to that mania for Biblical criticism, long prevalent in Protestant Germany, and which however it may inform our reason, and gratify a laudable curiosity, is in itself no guide to the knowledge of religious truth.—*Trans.*

we should abstain from entering more closely and minutely into the nature of these controversies. In contemplating the first steps of this great Revolution; in considering the circumstances of that period, we experience a feeling of regret, that the great problem of that age, the arduous task which devolved on it, of accomplishing an universal regeneration and real Reformation of the world, should have remained unexecuted, from the very revolutionary turn which affairs took — nay, that this task should not even have been understood or felt by any of the leading characters of the time. The earlier disputes between the spiritual and temporal powers had related to the dominion over certain territories, or over Ecclesiastical property in general, and especially to the jurisdiction of the state over the latter species of property. The allurements which the confiscation of church property held out to cupidity, must be ranked among the main causes which contributed to the diffusion of Protestantism.* Thus, for instance, Prussia, the country of the Teutonic order, was now converted into a secular dutchy; and in the interior of Germany, a celebrated knight,* led away by the spirit of that age of feud, invaded one of the Ecclesiastical electorates, thinking no doubt, that that state, like every other Ecclesiastical domain, was the lawful booty of the first comer. But independently of these par-

* Schlegel here alludes to Prince Albert of Brandenburgh.

tial changes and minor transactions, (and in many Protestant countries, such as England and Sweden, church property remained inviolate, and even Episcopacy was retained,) the hostility of the German Reformers to the church was of a different and more spiritual nature; and it was the religious dignity of the priesthood which was more especially the object of their destructive efforts. And this is the point, where doctrinal controversy enters within the province of history; for the priesthood stands or falls with faith in the sacred mysteries. The rejection of these mysteries, by one half of the Protestant body in Switzerland, France, England, and the Netherlands, Luther not only discountenanced, but strenuously reprobated; yet it was only by a subtle distinction he attempted to separate those mysteries from the functions of the priesthood; and it was not difficult to foresee that together with faith in the sacred mysteries, respect for the clergy must sooner or later be destroyed, as indeed experience has sufficiently demonstrated. For that great mystery of religion, on which the whole dignity of the Christian priesthood depends, forms the simple, but very deep internal keystone of all Christian doctrines; and thus the rejection, or even the infringement of this dogma, shakes the foundations of religion, and leads to its total overthrow. The pacific conferences of learned and well-meaning men of both parties, though often renewed, were not attended with real and ultimate

success; although sometimes, in looking at the language of such a man as the mild Melancthon, we are almost perplexed to discover the few points which do not coincide with the old Catholic doctrines—so nearly akin, and almost identical do the two religious systems appear, when we merely consider their separate parts. Equally fruitless were all those honest attempts at pacification, incessantly made by the Emperor Charles, who sought by his interim to create delay, while he indulged a secret hope, that the agitated waves of anarchy,—all that mighty tempest of opinion, would be allayed by time, and would finally be stilled. But that interim has been of longer duration than was at first calculated, and it still awaits the judgment of God for its great day of termination.

When we consider Luther's original powers of mind, independently of the use and employment which he made of those extraordinary powers, (for even the greatest comet, though it should cover half the heavens with the splendour of its light, can never possess, or be supposed to possess, the sun's genial warmth;)— when I say, we consider the intellectual endowments of this extraordinary man solely in themselves; the boldness of his speculations and the vigour of his eloquence will be found to form an epoch, not only (as is universally acknowledged) in the history of the German language, but in the progress of European science and European culture. After the first period in the intel-

lectual history of Europe, which I denominated the scholastico-romantic epoch, and after the second, which I termed the epoch of enthusiasm for Pagan Antiquity, and in which a Christian simplicity of eloquence and a depth of scientific enquiry appear as only happy and occasional exceptions; a third epoch now arose, which from the general spirit of the age, and the tone of the writings, which exerted a commanding influence over the times, cannot be otherwise designated than as the era of a polemico-barbarous eloquence. This rude polemic spirit which had its origin in the Reformation, and in that concussion of faith, and consequently of all thought and all science which Protestantism occasioned, continued, down to the end of the seventeenth century, to prevail in the controversial writings and philosophic speculations both of Germany and England. This spirit was not incompatible with a sort of deep mystical sensibility, and a certain original boldness of thought and expression, such, for instance, as Luther's writings display; yet we cannot at all regard in a favourable light the general spirit of that intellectual epoch, or consider it as one by any means adapted to the intellectual exigencies of that age. But with respect to the language and literature of Germany, so far as these are of general interest, I should wish to make one observation. Besides Thomas à Kempis, whom I have already mentioned, I might cite several other religious

writers of the fifteenth century and even of an earlier period, who though less known, were distinguished by a similar spirit, partly among those who made use of the Latin language, then universally current, and partly among those who, like Taulerus, for example, made the German the vehicle of their thoughts. And indeed were we to compare the gentle simplicity, the charming clearness of thought and expression which reign in the works of these writers, with the productions of the following age of barbarous polemic strife, we should then be furnished with the best criterion for duly appreciating the earlier and the later period.

With respect to those institutes of the church, which had early devoted themselves to the task of the propagation of the gospel, or of the defence and support of religion, and made this spiritual conflict and holy engagement the business of their lives; it now happened, as it had often occurred before, that the proper defenders of the church arose at that moment, and adopted that course and mode of defence which the circumstances of the church precisely required. The powerful prelates of the old Episcopal sees, who had rendered such high and imperishable services to the cause of European civilization, though they might not be unfaithful to the original spirit of their calling, and might be no strangers to science, were, however, much too dependant on government, and mixed up in affairs of state. The more popular and mendi-

cant orders, from their very nature and character, and their peculiar habits of life and modes of speech, were not always calculated to exert due influence on government, and the upper classes of society, while their ardent zeal, unmindful of times and circumstances, often transgressed the bounds of moderation. The great want of the age was a religious order, which established in opposition to Protestantism, should not be dependant on the state, but devoted exclusively to the interests of the church; a religious order, which well equipped with modern learning, science and accomplishment, possessing a knowledge of the world, acquainted with the spirit of the times, and pursuing the course which expediency dictated, with prudence and circumspection, should undertake the defence of the Catholic religion, and the propagation of the gospel in foreign countries, and worthily and successfully prosecute this twofold object. Such an order was the society of the Jesuits in its first institution; and that among the founders and first members of this order, there were men of undoubted piety and eminent sanctity, men animated by the sublimest principles of Christian self-denial, possessed of great intellectual endowments, and favoured by God with high preternatural powers, no unprejudiced historical enquirer will deny. Whether the reproaches which have been made to many members of this order, of having exerted an undue political influence, and displayed a spirit of

intrigue and ambition in the history of this period, be well-founded or not, I shall not stop to enquire; because such charges at best can affect individuals only, and not the society, whose very name indeed has become in our times the watch-word of party strife and contention. The severest condemnation of the Jesuits proceeds from a quarter where we clearly discern the most implacable hostility to Christianity and to all religion; and this circumstance ought to furnish the Jesuits with an additional claim to our good opinion; but any judgment on the merits of this society, as this is a question which more immediately regards the present age, is quite foreign to the purpose of the present work. If some members of the order adopted at this period those absolute maxims and principles of policy and government, which in general characterized that age; and if the writings of others were distinguished by that rude polemic tone and spirit spoken of above, and which was equally characteristic of those times; it would be unjust to lay to the charge of the order, or even of particular members, failings and defects which were common to the age, and a perfect exemption from which is the most rare of human excellencies.

A violent insurrection can be put down only by forcible means; but every system of terror, of whatsoever nature, is sure to provoke, sooner or later, a re-action equally terrible. And if the

dangerous disease be checked by means merely external, and no healing remedy be applied to the root and principle of the disorder, nor used to renovate the impaired organs of life—if the fire be smothered in its own flames—it will lie concealed beneath the ashes, and will burn in secret, till the first casual and unlucky spark shall kindle it anew into a fiercer blaze. Such, in my opinion, are the plain and obvious principles which the historian should bear in mind, while passing in review periods of revolution like the one under consideration; principles, which even now are susceptible of no very remote application.

In that first period of ferment which marked the birth of the reformation, the revolt of the peasants had been put down with amazing promptitude and vigour. It was but ten years later, when in the north of Germany, a new insurrection broke out, which from its religious complexion, seemed still more revolting, whose adherents sought to establish on earth the invisible empire of God by fire and sword, and whose new spiritual monarch, John of Leyden, made his triumphant entry into Munster, amid many and dreadful excesses; till at last this savage fanaticism was crushed, and (as invariably happens in similar cases), met with a bloody end.

But the most singular phenomenon at this momentous epoch was Henry VIII. of England: a prince who while he adhered to the Catholic doctrines, and zealously asserted them against

Luther, yet severed his kingdom from the church, declared himself its spiritual head, and by that monstrous and unchristian combination of the two powers, appeared in the midst of Christendom, like the Caliph of England. When, too, we take into consideration the private life of this Prince, his endless series of divorces, and the execution of his Queens; his conduct was a greater scandal to his contemporaries, and fixes a deeper stain on the history of his age, than any other earlier example in Italy, or elsewhere, several of which have been already mentioned. The executions on account of religion which took place under Henry, and which, as he was opposed to both Catholics and Protestants, affected the two parties alike, were of a peculiarly odious and blood-thirsty character. On this subject I wish to make one observation. From the connection which then subsisted between church and state, a case might easily arise, where a religious error would become a political crime. When an insurrection originating in a religious cause, breaks out and threatens the peace of society, like the religious war of the Hussites, and the revolt of the German peasants, no other resource remains but to put down force by force. But when the first violence has subsided, another and a better and a truly moral remedy should, if possible, be applied to the evil; and this remedy was not always administered in a right, benign. and truly Christian form. Strange and fanciful have been, in all

times and places, the offsprings of human error. Thus even in the most modern times, and in a peaceful and civilized country, examples still occur, where religious errors lead their unhappy dupes to violent attempts on their own lives, or the lives of others; and a wise legislation and humane judicature should rather treat these errors as mental diseases, than judge them according to the rigid letter of criminal law. How much more should not this be the case, when religious error is confined to the sphere of speculation, and is not attended with any practical consequences. It is often perhaps not easy to draw the line of demarcation between measures of wise precaution against the assaults of a dangerous fanaticism, and unchristian modes of punishment. But certainly the criminal process of Ecclesiastical tribunals at that period, was not only opposed to the spirit of Christianity, but at utter variance with the express and ancient canons of the church, and urgent admonitions of the Fathers, that the church should strenuously avoid the shedding of blood. Men sought to evade this wise and beautiful law, by abandoning all executions to the secular arm; but except in the punishment of actual crimes, and in the necessary defence against open insurrection, we must admit that the spirit of this law was grievously violated. A vindictive criminal jurisprudence, which was then dictated by the mutual rage of contending parties, and which was made still more revolting to Christian feel-

ings by the religious colouring it assumed, remains a stigma on that age; for it was the work not of one, but of both religious parties, or to speak more properly, of members of both parties. The commencement, indeed, of this great disorder—of this great departure from the law of love—is to be found in the middle age, during the strife of exasperated factions; but how small are those beginnings when compared with the excesses of subsequent times! When we hear the middle age called barbarous, we should remember that that epithet applies with far greater force to the truly barbarous era of the Reformation, and of the religious wars which that event produced, and which continued down to the period when a sort of moral and political pacification was re-established, apparently at least, in society and in the human mind.

END OF LECTURE XV.

LECTURE XVI.

Further developement and extension of Protestantism, in the period of the religious wars, and subsequently thereto.—On the different results of those wars in the principal European countries.

THE true Reformation, loudly demanded in the fifteenth century as the most urgent want of the times, not only by the capricious voice of the multitude, but by the first and most legitimate organs of opinion in church and state, and the nature of which had been long before clearly stated, and fully and generally understood,—ought to have been a divine Reformation. Then would it have carried with it its own high sanction—it would have proved it by the fact—and at no time and under no condition would it have severed itself from the sacred centre and venerable basis of Christian tradition, in order, reckless of all legitimate decisions, preceding as well as actual, to perpetuate discord, and seek in

negation itself a new and peculiar basis for the edifice of schismatic opinion. Such a vast, extensive, deep, and effectual Reform, which while it kept within the limits of ancient faith, and steadily adhered to its divine centre, would at the same time renovate and revivify the church, was not then accomplished. The disciplinary canons of the council of Trent undoubtedly contained many wise, excellent and wholesome regulations, whose efficacy has been proved by the experience of the different Catholic countries, and whose reception has been determined by the local circumstances of each; for these regulations intended for the correction and removal of abuses, and for the revival of ancient discipline, were not adopted without modification, nor received to a like extent in all Catholic countries. On the other hand, with respect to the Protestants, the decrees of the council of Trent, from the very nature of things, could be only of a defensive character. Instead of the desired Reformation, Protestantism early enough announced itself as a new and peculiar religion, and still more was it constituted as such; but the rupture was already consummated—the evil had become incurable, before the remedy was applied. Protestantism was the work of man; and it appears in no other light even in the history which its own disciples have drawn of its origin. The Partisans of the Reformation proclaimed indeed at the outset, that if it were more than a human work, it would endure, and that

its duration would serve as a proof of its divine origin. But surely no one will consider this an adequate proof, when he reflects that the great Mohammedan heresy, which more than any other destroys and obliterates the divine image stamped on the human soul, has stood its ground for full twelve hundred years; though this religion, if it proceed from no worse source, is at best a human work. But even as the mere work of man, the Reformation was unquestionably a mighty, extraordinary, and momentous revolution, which when once it had been outwardly established in the world, (though inwardly it remained in a state of perpetual agitation,) has thenceforward mostly directed the march of modern times, influenced the legislation and policy of the European states, and stamped the character of modern science, down to our own days, when though its influence has not been so exclusive and undivided, as at an earlier period, it has been still the main and stirring cause of all the great political changes, and all the new and astonishing events of our age. We must endeavour to view this great Revolution with the impartial eye of the historian, and labour duly to comprehend and judge it in all its manifold bearings, and in all its remote consequences; and if we should feel inclined to lament and deplore the long continuance of this unhappy division in the great European family, we should remember that such a feeling of regret, however innocent and natural in our own bosoms, and in our

own conviction, can furnish no adequate criterion for an historical decision. At any rate, we should in no case immoderately repine at such an event, and murmur against Destiny, that is to say, the ruling Providence which permits the occurrence of such evils. The permission by God of a mere human, unsanctioned enterprise, nay, of a mighty, general, protracted, and incurable division among mankind—a system of opposition with all its unhappy consequences, its moral impediments, and its political disasters; such a permission forms, as I have already observed, the great enigma of history—the wonderful secret of the divine decrees in the conduct of mankind, as well as in the conduct of individuals. Perhaps this great enigma will then only be perfectly unravelled, and the mystery which hangs over this subject, then only be perfectly dispelled, when this mighty Revolution shall have been terminated, and brought to a close. Even now, the experience we have acquired, however imperfect and limited it may be, makes one thing evident; namely, that the influence of Protestantism has not been confined to those states and countries where it became predominant, and where it received a public and legal establishment. Far greater was the danger, far more fatal were the consequences, when an open rupture, a formal separation from the church did not take place, or had, if a temporary, at least no permanent existence—but where Protestantism, that is to say, the spirit

of Protestantism, a like or a kindred set of opinions, was infused into the moral system of countries externally Catholic, and secretly instilled into the veins of the body politic, gradually corroded its vitals; till at last, amid a false and apparent repose, the long suppressed element of revolutionary innovation infected with its deadly virus, opinion, science, and lastly, government and society. The conscience in its enquiries after religious truth, to whatever decision it may come, only looks to the determination of a point of faith as the sole clue of its investigations. But in historical enquiries, this rigid intersecting line of faith forms no adequate rule of judgment. The experience of our own times, or that of the last generation has proved, that innovations in faith, politics and philosophy ingrafted on a Catholic nation, are far more fatal to its repose, and that of its neighbours, than a system of Protestantism which has settled into a state of permanent peace and stability. Hence for instance, the policy and political interests of England, which is a state more than any other essentially Protestant, have often been in perfect accordance with the political system of an old leading Catholic power. And I would ask, has the Atheism of the eighteenth century been productive of fewer commotions and less convulsion in the world, than Protestantism in the first period of its existence, or in the era of religious wars; although the infidel party in the last century by no means consti-

tuted a distinct and separate sect, but was like a deadly contagion of the spirit of the times, infecting all beside and around, above and below it, whithersoever the wind of chance, or the breath of fanatic zeal might carry it.

"According to my own personal conviction, the theological point of view is to be preferred in historical enquiries as the best and final rule of investigation. But in these latter times, when religious opinion is so divided, and where the juridical view of things, in which each party struggles to make out a favourable case for itself, leads only to endless disputes; the historian is compelled to view the diseased state of society with the eye of a pathologist. In medicine it is considered far better and more advantageous, that a dangerous disease should be got rid of in a decisive but happily terminated struggle for life or death, than that by any sudden check given to the crisis, the disorder should fall on any internal part, and thus attack and corrode the vital powers. This principle, which the history of particular countries has shewn to be equally applicable to man's moral existence, may be applied to the general state of Europe at that period. If Protestantism had then been outwardly suppressed and put down, would it not have raged inwardly, that is to say, would not the most essential part of Protestantism, the spirit of Revolutionary innovation, the spirit of destructive negation, rationalism, in a word, have secretly remained? And may we not

conclude from the examples of a partial experience, that that secret and inward working of the disease would have been far more dangerous and fatal?—I should wish that these and other like expressions before made use of, should not be taken as so many categorical assertions; for the question of doctrine, lying as it does beyond the reach of doubt, does not fall within the limits of my plan, and the perfect reconciliation of minds is not in the power of man, but can come only from God. But these expressions are merely meant to convey a conciliatory view of things in history, (and, as is the proper duty of the philosophic historian,) to vindicate the ways of providence. Undoubtedly this great religious contest, this long protracted struggle has tended to excite the emulation of both parties in the pursuits of learning, and the labours of science, to stir up a mutual vigilance in the moral conduct of individuals, as well as in the administration of states, and thus to keep both parties in a state of salutary watchfulness and activity. Even from the collision of these two conflicting elements, there has sprung up in some countries a new and third element, which though not such as could be desired, nor entirely conformable to Christianity, has still been productive of important and remarkable consequences. Of the eight or nine countries, in which Protestantism has obtained a firm footing, and acquired a permanent existence, there are three in particular, where it has been attended with

mighty historical effects, and where the originally destructive conflict of hostile elements has given birth to three new and momentous phenomena in the history of mankind. These are, in Germany the religious pacification, which forms the basis of her future prosperity, stamps the peculiar character of the German nation, and designates its future moral destiny: in England, the highly valued, or as it is there called, the glorious Constitution of 1688, whose mere outward form, or dead letter, has been an object of desire to so many other nations:—lastly in France, the Revolution in philosophy, produced by the indirect influence of Protestantism, and the combination of so many Protestant, or semi-protestant elements, and which gave birth to a frightful political Revolution, which after a short intervenient period of military despotism, has been succeeded in its turn by a mighty epoch of moral and social regeneration—a regeneration which indeed has not yet been consummated, which is still in a state of precarious and convulsive labour, but is even on that account the more entitled to the historian's attention.

Of the countries immediately contiguous to Germany, the home and cradle of Protestantism, Switzerland was at the commencement of the Reformation, the theatre of a fierce civil war, in which the Swiss Reformer fell fighting on the field of battle. But the strong federal spirit of the Swiss, the necessity of mutual defence, and

the nearly equal numbers and strength of both religious parties, produced at an early period a religious pacification. The indirect Protestant influence which French Switzerland has exerted over France, has continued very great and powerful from Calvin to Rousseau. After the German treaty of Westphalia, the Austrian Emperors established in Hungary, which was already half subdued by the Turks, and still more exposed to their ravages, the principle of religious toleration—a principle that became a received maxim of state, and was incorporated into the very constitution of the country. In the last half of the sixteenth century, there penetrated into Poland the sect of Socinus, which professed tenets distinct from those of the primitive Reformers, and which with the usually rapid march of religious innovation, and schismatic dissent, had now rejected along with the great Mystery of devotion, the fundamental article of Christian theology, the doctrine of the Trinity. As long as the Socinians formed a distinct and separate body of religionists, they were not very numerous in Poland, or elsewhere; but during the prevailing infidelity of the eighteenth century, they acquired many more disciples, and in many countries have become almost the predominant sect.—How Prussia, the land of the Teutonic order was transformed into a secular duchy, which for about a century remained connected with Poland, I have already had occasion to observe. Into no

country of Europe was Christianity introduced so late as into Lithuania, where the faith was planted only towards the end of the fourteenth century. In the ancient Russian provinces of Poland, as well as in Hungary and other neighbouring countries, a large portion of the population belonged to the Greek church. In the great struggle of the following age, and in the perpetual wars which Poland had to sustain against Turkey, Sweden and Russia, all these hostile and heterogeneous elements of which I have spoken, and to which may be added the real or apparent attachment of the religious Dissenters to Sweden, increased the general ferment and confusion in the Polish state, down to the final dissolution and dismemberment of the kingdom. Russia, which towards the end of the fifteenth century had been restored to a high degree of power and splendour by Wassili Ivanowitch, (who entertained the most friendly relations with the Emperor Maximilian, and who had established in his Empire the German Hanseatic league), Russia still remained totally separated from the European community, and was exempt from the influence of Protestantism, like Spain and Italy at the opposite extremity of Europe. The Scandinavian countries at the commencement of the fifteenth century, had been incorporated into one state; and considered merely in a geographical point of view, they might have formed a great and lasting power in the North; and under many vicissitudes, they remained

united till the sixteenth century. Yet the voice and feelings of the two nations were against the Union; and Gustavus Vasa effected at once the total and definitive separation of Sweden from Denmark, the establishment of his own monarchical sway in the former country, and the introduction of Protestantism, which was brought into Sweden, not as in other countries, by the torrent of popular opinion, but by the arm of power—by the authority of a sovereign who knew how to conduct the enterprise with steady perseverance, and slow, patient and consummate skill. In Sweden, however, Episcopacy was retained. By its situation betwixt Prussia and Poland, and by the Protestant influence in Germany, Sweden became for a time in the seventeenth century a great European power; and to this political eminence the personal qualities of Gustavus Adolphus, as well as of several other Swedish monarchs principally contributed. In Sweden, Protestantism did not give rise to any events of a new and peculiar character, or of great historical moment, as in England and Germany. The Reformation was established in Denmark, chiefly though not exclusively as in Sweden, by sovereign power; in Iceland, its establishment was almost the work of violence. In those still regions of the North, the real abuses and scandals existing in the Catholic church were neither so great nor numerous as in the Southern countries. There was greater simplicity of manners; and corruption

was much less diffused, much less generally known than even in Germany; and thus the ancient faith had struck deeper roots in the minds of men, and could not be eradicated but with difficulty. To that old Revolutionary spirit of the Swedes, which in their earlier history had often displayed itself in the party-contests of their high aristocracy, a wider field was now opened by the Reformation introduced by the court; and armed in the Protestant cause, this spirit found fuller scope in the troubles of Poland, in its connection with Prussia, and other states, and above all, in the great religious war of Germany. When at a later period, and after the Swedish ascendancy in Europe had passed away, this spirit became compressed within narrower limits, and was thrown back upon itself, it then broke out into many violent internal commotions.

It was only under the successor of the despotic Henry that Protestantism was really introduced into England; but it there appeared under two different forms, and with two parties in a state of mutual and violent hostility. In England Episcopacy was retained; but in Scotland, the Puritans, the Methodists of those days, had the ascendant. But under Queen Mary, the wife of Philip II., King of Spain, a Catholic re-action took place; and this again was succeeded by a Protestant re-action under Elizabeth, whose steady and inflexible policy alone consolidated the establishment of Protestantism

—a policy at whose shrine the head of the unhappy Mary Stuart fell a sacrifice. Thus things proceeded from one extremity to another—from the execution of King Charles I. to the establishment of a Republic, and the absolute sway of a Protector—till amid the various disputes of the Scotch and English Protestants, and the various struggles of national rivalry, the court fell back upon Catholicism. At last, King William from Holland, a century before the breaking out of the French Revolution, gave the final triumph to Protestantism, and brought to maturity the glorious constitution of that island, which has been so repeatedly transplanted, imitated and modified on the Continent and in other parts of the world. On this basis, a thorough Protestant policy was established, which affected even the public and international law of Europe — a policy which has so eminently characterized England in modern times, particularly during the period of her great power, and which was followed, or even accompanied by a Protestant philosophy. I should premise that this Protestantism in philosophy should not by any means be confounded with, but should carefully be distinguished from, the Revolutionary philosophy—from an unbridled anarchy in science and speculation, though the former in its corruption may easily degenerate into the latter. For the modern Paganism—the avowed Atheism of the eighteenth century acquired many more partisans and assumed a far

bolder attitude on the Continent, than in the Constitutional island, which even in philosophy oscillates in a sort of artificial equipoise between truth and error.

In the Netherlands, Protestantism was indeed a strong co-operative cause, but not the only cause of the rupture with Spain; for even in earlier times the Burgundian spirit had been prone to turbulence, and the arbitrary rule of the Spaniards had excited in other countries also general dissatisfaction, aversion, and resistance. When the Protestant half of the Netherlands had separated from Spain, and had established the sovereign and independent state of Holland, the latter ever exerted a powerful influence on England in all religious and political matters, in the same way as Belgium has ever exercised a marked influence over France. But in Holland, Protestantism did not give rise, as in Germany and England, to any events of a new and peculiar character, if we except the general toleration of religious sects, which was there carried to a further extent than in any other state.

In her own interior, Spain had an arduous problem to solve—she had to overcome the old energetic resistance of a whole people,—the tolerably numerous descendants of the former lords and conquerors of the country, who still adhered to the Arabian manners and language, and even in part professed the doctrines of Mohammedanism. This struggle, which com-

menced under Philip II. by very severe laws against the Moriscoes, terminated under Philip the Third, with the barbarous expulsion of the whole Moorish population to the coasts of Africa. That from the intimate and manifold relations which existed between Spain and Germany under Charles V., the armies of the Emperor may have introduced into Spain the opinions of the new German gospellers to a greater extent perhaps than can be now stated with certainty, or than is now susceptible of minute and accurate proof, is by no means improbable; and this fact would serve to explain, though not entirely to justify many acts of the Spanish government. At any rate, the Spanish mind and character, in other repects so generous and upright, so little prone to selfish cunning or fickle frivolity, became in the long strife and animosities of a fierce religious war, more and more partial and exclusive, arbitrary and violent. There yet lingered, however, many chivalrous virtues peculiar to this high-minded nation—many extraordinary and lofty effusions of religious genius, such as are displayed in the wonderful writings of St. Theresa, whose holy meditations are couched in language of such inimitable beauty. Among no other people did the spirit and character of the middle age, in its most beautiful and dignified form, so long continue and survive in manners, ways of thinking, intellectual culture, and works of imagination and poetry, as among the Spaniards; and it is not the mere effect of chance,

but it is a very remarkable and characteristic fact, that in Spain alone, the peculiar poetry of the middle age attained to its utmost perfection, and reached its last exquisite bloom.

In Italy, too, art and poetry flourished in her beautiful language; and classical erudition made considerable progress, and even arrived to a very advanced state, during that troubled period, when the rest of Europe was involved in religious disputes and civil wars. But the fair and flourishing Italian literature of that age may be compared to a blooming garden, situated on a volcanic soil. No immediate danger then threatened Italy, though we are not to estimate private opinions by the standard of those which publicly prevailed; there were at least no public examples of that excessive partiality and passionate enthusiasm for Pagan antiquity, which occurred in that earlier and brilliant period of moral ferment and false security—the fifteenth century. On the contrary, in some individual instances the real progress of science was impeded, and on the whole its march retarded by a dread of the danger of its abuse; and hence the old scholasticism remained longer than was right in hereditary possession of its exclusive empire, although that contentious and partly negative Rationalism of the middle age was ill calculated to supply the place of a truly Christian philosophy, which the circumstances of the church then so imperiously demanded. It should then have been borne in mind, that every new error—

every new shape which the old Proteus may assume in the changing spirit of time, requires, not indeed a new philosophy (for philosophy itself, which is, as the ancients said, the science of divine and human things, is in the sanctuary of its highest subjects and problems an edifice unchangeable through all ages, and built on the everlasting foundation of divine truth), but a new form and direction given to philosophy, a new resuscitation of its powers. Indeed the venerable Bishop and holy man of God, St. Charles Borromeo, had in his Manual of Religion furnished an example, in which we see the utmost profundity of ascetic science united with a beautiful lucidness of expression, and the greatest simplicity and purity of taste. But the regular philosophy of the schools remained for a long time yet much too scholastic; and it was prejudicial, or at least disadvantageous to the Catholic cause, that the first foundations of a better philosophy, of one at least more faithful to its high vocation, and of an enlarged and improved science, should have been laid by men, like Bacon and Leibnitz, who belonged to the opposite party.

Protestantism had penetrated into France from French Switzerland, as the very name of Hugonots indicates. The religious wars in France broke out much later than in Germany; and the religious disputes in that country had this distinctive character; that the Princes and noble leaders of the Opposition, the factious

among the high aristocracy, and the contending parties at Court, made the Protestants (who formed indeed only the minority among the people, and still more in the state, but yet a very important and powerful minority), the tools and instruments of their own political designs and intrigues. It is this peculiar combination of circumstances which has stamped the character of the French religious wars, and which distinguishes them from those of Germany. The religious wars in the former country were not of such long and uninterrupted duration, nor were they of so destructive and desolating a character as the thirty years' war. On the other hand, the treaties of religious pacification were of much shorter duration, and were renewed even five or six times, for they were ever followed by new insurrections. Even the edict of Nantes, which was destined to terminate this long anarchy, did not prevent the recurrence of troubles after the assassination of Henry IV., and was itself totally repealed at a subsequent period. The various political intrigues of discontented nobles, and of factious leaders of the Opposition, gave a very hateful complexion to the religious wars in France; and that disposition to vindictive retaliation, which swayed parties in the various alternations of power, presented formidable, and almost insurmountable obstacles to the establishment of a permanent religious peace. That odious character in the religious wars of France, appears in England

under equally revolting colours in the despotism of the eighth Henry, in the crafty policy of Elizabeth, in the great anarchical and regicide rebellion, and in the tyranny of Cromwell, and has been often and strongly pourtrayed by the national historians. It is extremely worthy of remark, as the fact serves to explain many posterior events in history, that the struggle in France remained undecided, partook from first to last of an uncertain and fluctuating character, and led neither to the establishment of a free Constitution, as in England; nor to the foundation of a firm, lasting, and irrevocable religious pacification, as in Germany. But this struggle remained an unsolved problem of state-policy, like the religious dispute itself—a dispute whose contagion infected the Catholics themselves, inoculated that portion of the population, and continued to rage among their descendants. In France, the Protestants were in a decided minority, and it was by other and subordinate causes that they acquired a temporary power and importance in the first religious wars; but in England they probably became the majority at a very early period, though not such an overwhelming majority as they form at the present day.

The Catholic and Protestant parties then divided Germany into two nearly equal portions, as in point of numbers they do at the present day; and although political power does not depend on numbers, particularly when, as was at

that time the case, so many heterogeneous elements were combined, yet both the contending parties were sufficiently strong not to succumb easily in the contest. It is this fact which ultimately established the necessity of a cordial and permanent religious peace, and caused that necessity to be so universally acknowledged. But this very equality of numbers, and still more the active interference of almost all the great continental powers in the contest, rendered it at first more obstinate and lasting. Never was there a religious war, so widely extended and so complicated in its operations, so protracted in duration, and entailing misery on so many generations. That period of thirty years' havoc, in which the early civilization, and the noblest energies of Germany were destroyed, forms in history the great wall of separation between the ancient Germany, which in the middle age was the most powerful, flourishing, and wealthy country in Europe, and the new Germany of recent and happier times, which is now gradually recovering from her long exhaustion and general desolation, and rising again into light and life from the sepulchral darkness—the night of death, to which her ancient disputes had consigned her.

We can be little astonished at the origin of this war — indeed it is almost a matter of surprise that hostilities did not break out sooner; and the very fact that external warfare was so long suppressed, may account for the violence

and animosity of the first conflict. The first religious peace was in reality a mere truce—another prolonged interim which still left many debateable points, that with the most honest intentions in both parties it was extremely difficult, and almost impossible to settle by a peaceful and equitable adjustment. Where so much combustible matter existed, the merest accident might enkindle a conflagration. This first occurred in Bohemia, where the old insurrection of the Hussites had been put down by force—(the only way in which on its first outbreak, it could have been suppressed) but where as it now appeared that no vital remedy had been applied to the roots of the disorder, much diseased and inflammable matter yet remained. Still the revolt of Bohemia was not the only cause or subject of a war, which some historians have considered rather as a complicated series of wars, partially varying in their object. The whole country—the age itself seemed involved in warfare; and war appeared as the permanent policy, the ruling spirit, the inveterate habit, and natural necessity of mankind. As a masterly hand* has seized and pourtrayed many events and incidents —many scenes and acts of this great tragedy —the religious feelings, and steadfast and inflexible character of the Emperor Ferdinand II. —the high military glory and conquests of the

* The author here alludes to the history of the Thirty years' war by Schiller.—*Trans.*

Swedish monarch Gustavus Adolphus—and the genius and disastrous fate of the General Wallenstein; — it is unnecessary to dwell at any length on these great historical recollections, though the subject is inexhaustible in itself. The peace which was the fruit of a high and imperious necessity, is in the point of view we here take, of far greater interest.

With respect to indemnities, the treaty of Westphalia did not differ from any other treaty of general peace, in which lands and parcels of land are to be allotted, and even secularized, but where the number of claimants exceeds the portions of allotment. Considered, too, as a treaty which restored, and fixed on a firm basis, the peace of the German Empire, the treaty of Westphalia did not depend in this, as in other respects, on the force of its own articles, but on the general system of European policy—on the principle of the balance of power which regulated that policy—a principle which then, and still more in later times, this treaty has much contributed to diffuse and extend. But it is as a solemn pact of religious peace, that I wish here particularly to consider the treaty of Westphalia—as the final conclusion of all religious wars (and in this respect it has never been materially violated)—as a lasting covenant of religious freedom, whose main principle continues deeply implanted in the German mind, while the two other relations in which this treaty remained so incomplete, have for the most part

lost their practical interest When we contemplate, too, this treaty as a noble labour of equity —the successful work of unwearied industry, it has no parallel among preceding treaties of peace; and hence it has become the basis of the international law of Europe, and the text-book of diplomatic science in modern times even down to our own days. Hence its long, undisturbed duration. The nations—the age itself blessed it as the termination of their long calamities; but far greater has been its influence on after-times. The religious peace which it established, has become in modern times a national habitude—a second nature to the German people; for here and no where else must we look for its high historical destination. It may be said that this, like every other peace where the question of right remains the subject of dispute, is only a truce—another mere interim—but it is a sacred and eternal truce—a divine interim—that is to say, an intermediate state of peace to last till God shall pronounce his final and unfailing award. Of little moment to the philosopher, who considers this religious peace in its vast bearings on the past, the present, and the momentous future, is the reflection of the Jurist how far, and under what restrictions this treaty in the altered circumstances of recent times, can be considered as really valid and politically binding. For more than any other treaty, has this solemn pact of religious peace been interwoven with life, and become a reality. And

when we take a wide survey of the world, and include the future in our prospective ken, we may say, that now that most of the separate articles of this treaty have lost their value, and are no longer susceptible of execution, the general spirit and object—the high import of this religious peace are much nearer their fulfilment than formerly, when the practical application of this treaty to particular cases was solely considered. For that outward, but lasting covenant of religious peace—that holy truce and interim forms the prelude and introduction to another, higher, far more comprehensive, spiritual and divine peace, for which our age—the epoch of a mighty regeneration — is irrevocably destined. For how can Christianity, that is to say, eternal truth itself, be for ever torn by divisions? The solution of the great problem of the last three hundred years is by no means complicated, if we understand it in this sense, but extremely simple. For, if as it is the object of all true and elevated philosophy to prove, faith and science are really and essentially one, faith will be restored to its former unity, and then the schism between faith and science will cease.

Even as regards the political relations of the present times, this great, fundamental treaty of peace has become a new Christian basis of international law; for the spirit of Christianity requires that where absolute justice, which is rarely attainable, cannot be found, a system of peaceable and equitable compromise should

before all things be preferred. And hence this treaty has, for all succeeding times, stamped the pacific and conservative policy of the great German power of Austria. In France and England, indeed, religious wars afterwards occurred; but they were merely the last agitations—the after-pains of that fearful period of convulsive labour. These commotions were soon allayed; and the example and precedent of this great religious pacification in Germany, highly and universally admired as it was, caused the principle of religious toleration to be tacitly acknowledged as one which religion and necessity alike prescribed for the imitation of all Europe.

Among the last and most frightful consequences of the general revolution in the church, was the calamitous execution of King Charles the First, which for the sake of order, I have previously adverted to, and which took place a year after the establishment of the great religious peace in Germany, and was followed forty years afterwards by the great national peace of England—the final settlement of the British constitution. Among the lamentable events which occurred at that period in France, was the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, the last, and comparatively speaking, the most solid and durable of the treaties of religious peace made in that country—a revocation which can by no means astonish us, since this edict, destitute of all internal and external guarantees, and which emanated solely from absolute power, could not offer

the same security, nor possess the same durability, as the great, fundamental treaty of Westphalia. Yet both in France and abroad, this measure, so appalling to the whole European world, was, after so long an interval, extremely unexpected. One of the effects of this measure was a cruel war of extermination carried on in the mountains of the Cevennes against the Protestants, who appear to have there derived a part of their tenets from some of the earlier sects of the middle age. With respect to the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, considering it merely as an act of authority, and independently of the blow which it gave to the establishment of a permanent religious peace, we can only say that such an abuse of power on the part of the majority, (and it is to the influence of a preponderant majority this act was ascribed by public opinion,) such an abuse of power was a very dangerous precedent in the native land of all violent reactions; and thus in our days the emigration of the French nobility has been the great historical counter-blow to the banishment of the Hugonots.

This violent expulsion of the Protestants could not even accomplish the immediate object of its authors; for the spirit of Protestantism had struck much too deep roots in France; and the evil could not be removed by mere physical force, and without the application of a moral remedy. The Protestant influence of French Switzerland was not destroyed, and indeed it

became still more powerful in the sequel; while a far deeper wound was inflicted on the Catholic cause in France by the spread of Jansenistical principles from the Netherlands, which, supported as those principles were by great literary talents, exerted then a mighty influence over the French nation. The essence of Jansenism was the Rationalism of Calvin, combined with feelings of pietism, and covered over with a deep varnish of Catholicism. It was not the small party of the Jansenists of Utrecht, excluded as they were from the church, and completely separated from the two great religious parties of Europe, that could injure the Catholic cause in France; but it was that modified or disguised Jansenism which had crept into the very bosom of the Gallican church, and there grew up in secret, that was most to be feared. All these partial or disguised influences of the spirit of Protestantism derived their full sanction from the theory of a Gallican church, such as it was proclaimed by the supreme authority in the state. In the Protestant constitution of England, indeed, the principle of a National church, like the Anglican, (however such a principle may be opposed to the very essence and fundamental maxims of Christianity), is not inconsistent with the origin and general doctrines of that church. But in the Catholic church, where the principle of national dissent is not admissible to a like extent, such a system is perfectly absurd, and carries with it its own refutation.

The older theory of a Germanic church cannot be here adduced as an historical precedent; for that theory was started with a view to regulate the external relations of the church, or to fix with more precision the limits of the Papal and Imperial power, but did not refer to matters of doctrine, or to the internal discipline of the church. Yet with this system of a Germanic church, in the period of the Ghibelline ascendancy, many errors were mixed up — the first germs of the schism afterwards consummated. But this disguised, half-schism of the Gallican church, not less fatal in its historical effects than the open schism of the Greeks, has contributed very materially towards the decline of religion in France, down to the period of the Restoration. It was not only the dispute with Rome, which Louis XIV. carried to such fearful extremes; but the alliances he so frequently renewed with the Swedish conqueror, and with the Turkish power (still so formidable to the whole of Christendom), which must, as coming from a Catholic quarter, have given much scandal to the age; and we must at least allow that the foreign policy of Lewis XIV. was scarcely in any respect Christian, and that it prepared the way for that relaxation of moral and religious principles which took place in France under his feebler successors. Lewis XIV. undoubtedly well knew how to strengthen his regal prerogative, and render it more absolute, and in this work, like several of his predecessors, evinced

the most systematic art, and the greatest determination of character. But all the great problems of that age—all the religious questions which then divided the world, which forming as they did the highest object of all practical reflection and conduct were then so warmly agitated, could not be brought to a permanent, adequate, and generally satisfactory solution by the capricious mandates of power, or the partial adjudications of regal authority. And if in this establishment of absolute power in the interior, no regard is paid to the lawful rights either of Foreign nations, or of the people at home, what security is there that such a system will or can endure?

The splendour of the then French literature is one of the main pillars on which the glory of that reign and century depends—this literature which attained so high a degree of perfection, contains however to some extent the germs of that political scepticism, and those religious errors, which led to the disasters of subsequent times. An Æsthetic cristicism of pure art, falls not within the limits of the plan I have traced out to myself, and I can notice subjects of this nature only inasmuch as they serve to denote the character of particular ages and nations. As in no country was the spirit of the middle age—the scholastico-romantic character of the first period of European cultivation, both in the tone of feeling and the mode of expression so long preserved, nor raised to such a state of high

refinement and beautiful perfection, as in Spain; so we may say that the peculiar characteristic of the French mind in the age of Lewis XIV. consisted in a studious and minute avoidance of the two principal defects in the intellectual productions of the middle age—the scholastic vagueness and obscurity in works of speculation on the one hand, and the fantastic wildness in works of imagination on the other. That choice and exquisite taste which prevails in all those models of secular and clerical, historical, poetical, and philosophic eloquence, which that age produced in such abundance, originated in this species of precision averse from all excess and obscurity. And it was by the clearness and lightness it owed to this principle that the French language became, in the eighteenth century, the universal model and most convenient medium, not only of conversation, but of epistolary communication, among the polite classes of all European nations. But in a comprehensive survey of general literature, this standard of a pleasing style must not be considered as universally applicable, or higher than any other; and without wishing to compare objects totally dissimilar in themselves, I may observe that although among all the classical writers and orators of that age, Bossuet is the greatest in point of style, and at the same time the most solid and intellectual, yet the *naive* loquacity and infantine simplicity which distinguish the incorrect, old French diction of St. Francis of Sales,

are peculiarly graceful and attractive in themselves; while in the depth and clearness of the ascetic spirit, the Saint far surpasses the former writer more celebrated in the world. ..

In the regular philosophy of the schools, the Latin was mostly the prevailing language during the seventeenth century. In this the system of Descartes then formed an epoch, or at least obtained very general credit. His fanciful vortices in nature, as well as his rigid demonstration by reason, of that principle which is exalted above all reason, comprise rather the first germ of the various errors in the physics and metaphysics of the succeeding age, than a sound basis of true science, and a Christian philosophy of the human mind. Spinoza was the immediate disciple of Descartes, but it is in Germany alone that his rationalist system of pantheism, expressed as it is in the forms of mathematical demonstration, and embellished by a morality pure and noble, (at least in appearance and in its general outline,) has been justly appreciated in its true metaphysical import, and has found philosophic critics and imitators. But in its negative bearings, the philosophy of Spinoza, together with other writings by that inquirer and others on and against revelation, had a very extensive influence in those times; and that philosophy forms the notable point of transition to the metaphysical speculations of our own age. Socinus had directed his attacks against the great mystery in the existence of the living God — the

Christian dogma of the Trinity. In the system of Spinoza, philosophic Protestantism, or the progressive spirit of negation, advanced one step further; for he denied the personal existence, or the living personality of God, and endeavoured to substitute for the notion of the God-head the empty idea of the Infinite.

On the other hand, the systems of Bacon and Leibnitz were two different foundations laid in that age for a higher and a better philosophy — systems which by a more extensive developement and harmonious combination of their parts might have been moulded into a frame of phylosophy thoroughly Christian. Almost all the scientific labours of Leibnitz were directed to this point, namely, the demonstration, confirmation, and exemplification of the truths of Christianity, by the aid of science. The vast system of spiritualism, exalted far above all ideas of nature, which was propounded, or rather sketched out by Leibnitz, (with the exception of some peculiar opinions and mere hypotheses,) agrees perfectly with that purer Platonism which all the Christian writers and fathers of the first ages inculcated. And the fundamental principles of such a philosophy, if exposed in their native clearness and simplicity and without adventitious alloy, are the same which in their general spirit are to be clearly traced, or are tacitly implied in the sacred Scriptures, whose lofty purposes, however, rise far above the narrow forms and limited sphere of philosophic

investigation. How well Leibnitz understood and appreciated, and how far he subscribed to the truth of the Catholic religion, has been brought to light in a singular manner in our own days;* and if we except some oversights, very pardonable under all circumstances, his philosophic sketch of the Catholic system of theology, is in its masterly brevity one of the boldest and happiest expositions of that religion, at least for the general purposes of the world. The other great celebrated philosophical system of modern times, was based in the principles of the philosophy of experience—a system which has tended to enlarge almost immeasurably the field of natural discoveries. As the founder of the philosophy of experience—Bacon had conceived it, that philosophy, if we except some particular defects and individual errors, is by no means at variance with the Christian philosophy of Revelation; for the latter is in itself a philosophy of experience, though of another, higher, and spiritual kind. And it is the more necessary to keep this in view, as otherwise the ordinary abyss of rationalism can scarcely be avoided. The case is widely different when the principles of the empirical philosophy, as in

* The author alludes to the systema Theologicum of Leibnitz, first published in Paris in the year 1819, from the manuscript sent by the court of Prussia to that of France. It was published by the Abbe Emery, who accompanied the Latin original with a French translation.—*Trans.*

Locke and his followers, are directed against everything exalted, supernatural and spiritual in man and his consciousness. By this important distinction, Bacon is an European philosopher, like Leibnitz; but Locke is a mere English philosopher; as it was in England this Protestant philosophy sprang up and kept pace with the Protestantism of state, engendered and nurtured by the Constitution of 1688. However, in England, the Protestant philosophy, true to its character, kept within the limits of a mitigated scepticism, and did not plunge into the same wild, revolutionary excesses as the French philosophy of the eighteenth century, that started with the same principles.

The high intellectual cultivation of the English is by no means confined to this negative philosophy, but is of a very peculiar character, and like the British Constitution, combines in the most singular manner the most heterogeneous elements. For although the British Constitution is generally considered as the fashionable model for our times, and in one respect may indeed be so considered; yet a powerful aristocracy and many parts of the feudal constitution of the middle age, are there established in a sort of harmony, or at least permanent equipoise with the more modern elements of commerce and democracy. The heroic spirit of chivalry, and the whole moral character of the middle age were long paramount in England; and hence in the poetry of no country, if we except the Spa-

nish, is that spirit so conspicuous. The struggles between the houses of York and Lancaster during the fifteenth century, which in the rugged and almost savage sternness of those heroic characters, bear no little resemblance to the contests of the Guelfs and Ghibellines, form the heroic and traditionary, though not very remote era of British history—an era which witnessed, too, the high military glory that England acquired in the many battles and chivalrous engagements fought on the French soil. The great national poet of England, who has taken the subject of many of his dramas from that glorious period of his country's annals, maintains a sort of sceptical medium — a kind of poetical balance between the romantic enthusiasm of elder times, and the clear-sighted penetration of modern; and it is in this peculiar combination of qualities, that the originality of his genius, his unfathomable depth and high intellectual charm partly consist. As the Constitution of England — that is, the balance of her social institutions — sprang out of the old and mighty struggles which had convulsed that country; we must not be surprised at finding in her higher poetry, which is only the image and reflection of life, the same artificial union and combination of the conflicting elements existing in her political organization. A profound analysis of art, conducted exclusively with this view, and towards which the German mind has a strong and perhaps excessive inclination,

would be foreign to my present plan. To point out the traits of analogy existing between the productions of intellect, and the ages and nations to which they severally belong, may serve to throw a clearer and more vivid light on important periods and momentous epochs of history; and it is with this view I have indulged now, as formerly, in short parallels of this kind. Down to the most recent times, this marked predilection for the romantic world of the middle ages, and the chivalrous days, as well as the bold genius of poets bursting through all vulgar trammels, have been the distinctive character of English poetry, and have partly tended to make it so great a favourite with all the nations of Europe.

On the other hand, the negative philosophy of the English remains true to its character, in as far as carefully shunning all objects of a higher nature, it has for the most part made it a principle to limit its views entirely to man, without attempting to dive and penetrate into the profound mysteries of the Deity, or into the internal secrets of nature. To this a high philosophy will object, man is no isolated being; but as he was originally placed by his Creator in nature, it is only in that connexion with God and Nature, that the mysteries of his inward being, and the history of his outward progress can be fully understood and explained In historical researches and narrations, when these are confined to special subjects and particular

eras, and do not attempt the more comprehensive plan of the Philosophy of History, that confined spirit of philosophic investigation which limits its views exclusively to man, is not prejudicial; for on the other hand, the flexible powers of poetical genius (unless their activity be cramped by the sceptical influence of a Protestant philosophy), keep the mind alive to all high and generous qualities, characteristic peculiarities, and original greatness in men and events. Hence that department of British literature which embraces historic research and narrative, is peculiarly fertile, and has met with a general and European success.

The Protestantism of state, which was brought to maturity by the English Constitution, was during the eighteenth century, when England held generally the foremost rank among the nations, extended and applied in the system of the balance of power, to the whole Continent of Europe. But the Protestantism of science which originated there, formed together with the system of religious peace, the first foundation of Illuminism; and denotes the whole period of its history from the commencement of the eighteenth century down to the French Revolution.

END OF LECTURE XVI.

LECTURE XVII.

Parallel between the religious peace of Germany and that of the other countries of Europe.—The political system of the Balance of Power, and the principle of false Illuminism prevalent in the eighteenth century.

The great benefits of the religious peace of Germany, which founded upon, and springing out of a great historical necessity, has struck such deep roots in the public mind, and at last become a second nature to the Germans, may be best appreciated by a comparison with the state of religious liberty such as it now exists, or did recently exist among other nations—and those in truth which are in every other respect the most civilized of modern Europe. In Germany, indeed, the strict and vigilant maintenance of that religious peace, on which her whole political existence depends, and without which she would fall into an anarchic struggle of parties; has received in recent times a new

confirmation; and this religious peace, which has been revived, not indeed in its old forms, but in its general spirit and essential import, has become only the more necessary, as by the recent partitions of territories, a great intermixture of religions has been introduced into states where formerly one religion only prevailed. Thus in that state,* which was originally the greatest of all the Protestant states of Germany, and is now even still more powerful than formerly, a full half of the population is Catholic. Nearly to the same extent, the same observation will apply, though inversely, to that Catholic state† in Germany, which next to the Imperial state itself, is the greatest. So strongly has this Magna Charta‡ of the religious liberty of Germany, (which scarcely needs any external securities, now that most of those securities no longer exist, or at least have been very materially altered in the forms under which they formerly existed in the Confederation and in the Imperial courts of Judicature), so strongly, I say, has this Magna Charta taken root both in the public mind and state-policy of Germany, that the principle of religious freedom no longer depends on the degree of population, or the relation of numbers. Thus, for example, in the German Catholic provinces of the Austrian Empire, the Protestants, though compared with the rest of the population they form so very small a

* Prussia. † Bavaria. ‡ The Treaty of Westphalia.

minority, have been long in possession of the most unlimited religious freedom; and in the country* which was the very cradle of Protestantism, the fact that the royal dynasty and a very small minority of the nation profess the Catholic religion, has been no obstacle to the most cordial, deep, and solid attachment on the part of the people to their old hereditary rulers—an attachment which has been evinced in the most unequivocal and affecting manner by all classes of the nation at every period of misfortune. If now we look to the other great states and civilized countries of Europe, which like Germany were involved for a century and more in the turmoil of religious wars, and consider what issue these wars have had, what results they have produced, we shall find that in England civil war indeed no longer rages. But how the relations between the Anglican church on the one hand, which force alone maintains in its political privileges and ascendancy, and the Protestant dissenters (who have a different character from those in Germany, or elsewhere, and are distinguished by a very violent sectarian spirit) and the Catholic population of Ireland, on the other; how these relations, I say, can be said to exhibit a state of religious peace, I am at a loss to understand; for at no very remote period the latter country was the theatre of a bloody civil war. We must at least allow that a solid

* Saxony.

and permanent internal peace, a perfect conciliation of minds, and an equitable adjustment of the respective rights and claims of both parties, have apparently not yet been brought to a quiet and satisfactory issue. Nay, to judge from those great parliamentary discussions in England, wherein not unfrequently and from passages the most obscure, and the least observed by the superficial eye, the most secret motives, the deepest springs of policy, and the most hidden thoughts and disquietudes of the statesman come to light in that wonderful stage of public life; it would appear that great self-apprehension reigned in the minds of English politicians; —a fear which is the more likely to arise on every serious retrospect that people take of the old abyss of their civil contests; for more than any other nation, they are conversant with their own annals, and have them ever before their eyes, and live in the past with all the intense feelings of the present. Hence every individual among them knows full well that the fearful and fermenting elements of their great old civil commotion have never been perfectly appeased, and finally allayed, but have been merely repressed from time to time, and prevented from breaking out anew by means of a Constitution, which on that account is reputed *glorious*. And must not every Englishman ask himself the peremptory question, how a country can be, or be termed free, when its Catholic inhabitants, amounting to a third part of its entire population, are doomed

to undergo indescribable tyranny, and are in fact treated like a conquered nation?*

In France there prevails on matters of religion an indifference of feeling, rather than any party contentions, or violent animosities, at least among the greater part of the nation; and so long as the matter is not mixed up with political considerations, this feeling of indifference will bend to one opinion or to the other. Even in former times the religious wars, though violent enough, were not of so long and uninterrupted a duration and so widely destructive a nature, as in Germany, and comparatively speaking at least, were not attended with such frightful circumstances, as in England. But on the other hand, they did not lead to those mighty, definite and permanent results, such as in Germany, a religious pacification—and in England, the establishment of a free Constitution. And in the revocation of the edict of Nantes, accomplished in defiance of all antecedent promises, stipulations and rights, the victory of the Catholic majority of the nation, unjust in itself, was merely apparent and illusive, for all the great problems of moral life remained unsolved, and the hostile and fermenting elements of Protestantism or a species of semi-protestantism retained their full force; till a hundred years after this arbitrary proceeding, an immense and for-

* The passing of the Catholic Relief Bill has happily rendered this observation obsolete.—*Trans.*

midable reaction occurred in the breaking out of the great Revolution. That grand conflict of the European nations which sprang out of this Revolution, and attended its whole course, must be looked upon in no other light than as a religious war; for a formal separation not only from the church, but from all Christianity—a total abolition of the Christian religion was an object of this Revolution which lasted nine years, before a sort of religious peace was established, by which it seemed to be acknowledged, that religion, for a time at least, was not an absolutely superfluous want of the people; for the attempt of theophilanthropy, or the public and legal establishment of a pure rationalist religion had no success. But as respected persons, this peace was not of long duration, as was but too soon apparent in the ill-treatment and imprisonment of the head of the church. The drama of the old Ghibelline times was renewed, and Ghibelline principles and maxims of policy were openly avowed. If the military success of the French had been of longer continuance, these principles would have made incomparably greater progress, and would have been more clearly unfolded, as there was a secret inclination to a certain Mahometan junction of civil and ecclesiastical power in the hands of the same person. It could not, however, have escaped the keen perception of Buonaparte, how much the feelings and opinions of Europe, (whatever indifference it may manifest about religion, and however easily it

may give its sanction to encroachments on spiritual power, from want of knowledge or of interest in those matters,) are ever adverse to a complete and anti-christian fusion of secular and ecclesiastical authority. That fanatic and destructive character which distinguished the Revolutionary struggle in its origin, remained the same, though somewhat modified in its form during the time of the Imperial conquests; and the general resistance of the nations of Europe, down to the final triumph of the Allies, retained to the last the character of a religious war, carried on in defence of all that was most sacred to humanity. Thus that great struggle must be considered as a five-and-twenty years' religious war, or rather perhaps in its origin, a war of irreligion, though it is not worth while to dispute about a word. For this reason, in the country where this mighty Revolution had its birth, the restoration of monarchy is inseparably connected with that of religion; and it is by a religious regeneration, that the statesmen of that kingdom, who are well-wishers to their country, and have in view its permanent well-being, and not the idle and transient splendour of military glory, should endeavour to secure the future destinies of France.

This universal and convulsive crisis of the world in latter times, now that it has happily and entirely passed by, has created a mighty chasm, and thrown up a wall of separation between the present age and the eighteenth century. Now

that the conflict is over, and all the illusions incident to that state of struggle have passed away, the eighteenth century, which bore that great Revolution in its womb, and at last brought it into life, can be judged with greater impartiality and historic freedom, and better understood, and more duly appreciated in all its comprehensive bearings. For during the existence of any struggle, it is apparently given to few mortals to form respecting passing events a judgment which can be truly termed historical; as in general, a certain distance of time is requisite to the formation of just and accurate opinions. In this last section of universal history, it would be idle and superfluous to enter into a minute detail of facts so generally known. It is on that account the more important for the due illustration and philosophic investigation of a period so near to us, briefly to point out amid the multitude of well-known facts, the leading and determining causes of all the events which occurred. The leading and stirring principles of all occurrences and enterprises in the eighteenth century, as the history of that age abundantly proves, may be traced on the one hand, to the system of the Balance of Power in the internal government and outward relations of states; and on the other, to the principle of illuminism in the department of morals, though this principle was not confined to the sphere of mind, but exerted a great practical influence on real life, and finally brought about a total revolution

in the state. Both these principles—the system of the balance of power, which was the protestantism of state—and the principle of illuminism, which from its negative character, agreed in the main with the Protestantism of philosophy, and was only a natural consequence of that philosophy,—had their origin chiefly in England, and there first, or more than elsewhere, reached their development. For from the commencement of the eighteenth century down to the mighty Revolution which closed it, England was the state that took the lead in every occurrence and transaction, gave the tone to the age, and formed the strong central lever to the system of the Balance of Power. The plan of such a system had indeed been openly avowed several centuries before, and had been acted upon as a principle in many political enterprises and negotiations; but the then existing circumstances of the world, which required and admitted, of a far higher law of adjudication, confined the operation of this principle within very narrow limits. Thus it was a far higher principle of Christian equity, which constituted the basis of the holy Roman Empire of Germany in the middle age; and it was only when that empire had been weakened and undermined by various shocks, external and internal, that the system of the Balance of Power began towards the latter part of the fifteenth century, to exert a commanding influence. Italy was in general the theatre and arena for the workings of that po-

licy; Spain, France, and Austria, next Venice, the Pope, and Switzerland, the active agents in that changeful struggle; and Naples and Lombardy the subject of dispute, and the prize of contention. But when the progress and success of the Turkish arms from without, and the formidable, growing and fermenting elements of religious strife from within, had threatened Europe with total ruin, or at least with the most formidable danger, the new, inferior principle of policy was compelled to yield to the urgent necessities of the times, and to old opinions not yet totally extinct. Men felt the absolute want of an Emperor and general Protector of Christendom, invested as in ancient times, with power really adequate to his dignity; and this was the motive which led to the election of the Emperor Charles V. The extent of his empire, however, made his power appear greater than it was in reality. If a decided and formidable preponderance of power existed any where, we must look for it on the side of the Turks, whose triumphant arms brought them ever nearer towards Europe, and whose progress Charles was little able to arrest. France, situated as she was in the centre of Europe, had nothing to apprehend from the Turks, while she was sufficiently strong and powerful to disregard danger from any quarter. Her rivalry with Spain, and her perpetual wars with the Emperor, were exceedingly injurious to Europe, as they cramped and impeded all the operations of the emperor in behalf of Christendom, and all his exertions for

providing for its external and internal security. But to no country were those wars more hurtful than to France herself, which had need of all her energies for the maintenance of internal tranquillity, in order by her undivided activity, to be able to allay and settle the various elements of religious strife, which afterwards broke out with such fearful violence. At that period, and even during the seventeenth century, the wars of Turkey were generally considered as religious wars, partly from the dreadful consequences which ensued to the Christian religion in the conquered countries, where if it were not entirely extirpated, it was at least doomed to the severest oppression; and partly from the fanatic and sanguinary character of those wars themselves. The alliances which France during the religious wars of the seventeenth century, and contrary to the interests of her own creed, entered into with Sweden and Turkey, under pretence of maintaining the Balance of Power, were more than anything else prejudicial to the Catholic cause, inflicted a deep wound on Christian principles, and contributed much to mislead the opinion of the age. The final result of this policy was the establishment of a decided preponderance on the part of France, towards the end of the seventeenth century—a preponderance which then at least must be ascribed to Lewis XIV. only.

Now that the religious wars were terminated, this appeared the period proper for the establishment of the system of the Balance of Power—

a system which must ever be called into action, when every higher principle of international adjudication has ceased to be applicable — and which, as it was the source whence had emanated the whole moral and intellectual culture of the eighteenth century, attained now a more systematic form, and held a more brilliant and dignified place, than at any former period of history. England was the strong, central prop of the great lever for the European Balance of Power, while Austria, which in every age has been true to a pacific system of policy, (although her moral existence depended on far higher principles of religion), formed on the Continent the other main stay to the system of the Balance of Power, now become the universal principle of international policy. And this firm alliance between the two powers was in general the external basis of this system, independently of the many fluctuations which were inherent to its very nature. We must not however confound this principle of policy with a conservative and pacific system, acting according to existing and acknowledged rights; for although the former system be much akin to the latter, and both may easily and naturally co-operate in a common resistance to an overgrown power, regardless of all right; still they are far from being one and the same; and differ widely in many characteristic properties, nay in their very nature. The fundamental law of the conservative and pacific policy is Right—not an abstract notion and pure

ideal of absolute justice, by which the international policy of states is to be fashioned and regulated; but rather (if for the sake of greater clearness I may be allowed the use of a mathematical phrase) an applied right, that is to say, an existing and acknowledged right. For if we seek the first origin and ultimate foundation of all right and all justice, we must seek it in God alone, who is the eternal arbiter of the world, of states and nations as well as of individuals, and who well knows how to requite every great political injustice on his appointed day of retribution, to visit it with unexpected punishment, and to reduce it to its own nothingness by an often fearful award. But so soon as man, or any earthly power presumes to lay its hand upon this work—to propose to itself absolute justice, to judge and regulate all things by that standard, and to model the world in conformity to it—the consequence is a total Revolution in all the relations of society—an entire subversion of all existing order; and it is this false idea which is the principle or the pretext of all those fanatic attempts at universal conquest, and of every Revolution not directed to the attainment of specific rights, but aiming at sweeping, unqualified and universal change. It is only when in the general system of existing and positive international rights, some occurrence has produced a chasm—some interstice appears—some particular question remains, or becomes anew, open and *debateable ground*—*that a pacific policy*

acting on the principle I have mentioned, can and will in such special cases, revert to the original, pure and eternal justice of God. But in the material system of the Balance of Power, right and wrong are not the ultimate object, nor the sole criterion of political estimation, nor the sole rule of political negociations; but the great object is the prevention or removal of any ascendancy which endangers or even threatens danger to the general interests of the powers. Both systems of policy may very well concur in their effects, and in most cases really do concur, for the establishment of political ascendancy is generally founded on the violation of existing rights, or may easily lead thereto. But this is not absolutely necessary; cases may easily be conceived where right is clearly on the side of ascendant might, as was once the case in the middle of the eighteenth century, and as happened in another way towards the beginning of the same age, when the cause of justice was espoused by preponderant power only. And in such cases, with a total disregard to justice, this system of the material Balance of Power will fling its weight into the opposing scale, in order to impede the progress of overgrown dominion. In another respect, also, the character and ordinary tendency of this system differ widely from that pacific policy, which aims at the preservation of all existing and acknowledged rights. In the latter system, it is only the actual disturbance and real violation of the general peace of

nations, which can lead to the declaration of war. But on the contrary, in the former system it is merely a formidable preponderance of power—a mere possibility of its abuse—a dread of future danger, which is deemed a sufficient motive for engaging in hostilities—a motive by which a state, where this is the exclusive principle of policy, is undoubtedly, as has often been objected to England, more easily and more quickly determined, than any other: and such a motive may operate the more easily in a country like England, where those inducements for entering into war with more haste than is expedient or desirable, are strengthened by the fact, that an insular and naval state, concentrated within itself, can carry on hostilities with all the advantages of peace, and with the wonted activity of trade. England during the eighteenth century acquired the highest glory, and in general made a very beneficial use of her great power, in contributing to the general aid, security and freedom of Europe; and in what is here said, it is by no means intended to cast a slur on, or to undervalue the old and well-acquired power of Great Britain, as such a censure would be futile in itself, and extremely misplaced here. But for the right understanding of the peculiar political character and tendencies of an age, like the eighteenth century, so near to our own times, it is necessary to observe that the system of the Balance of Power is either merely the substitute for a higher principle,

where the latter is no longer susceptible of application, or in those cases where the latter hath really force, the system of the Balance of Power must be considered a mere supplement—a subordinate auxiliary for the settlement of incidental questions. But with the great Revolution which closed the eighteenth century, there commenced an epoch of intellectual as well as political barbarism and desolation, to which the mere negative principle of an equilibrium of power, however it might be adequate to the ordinary relations of civilized states, was no longer applicable; for now a higher principle of moral and social reparation was needed. In no department of human activity can the positive power of evil be overcome by a mere negative principle of resistance, but solely by a principle of a homogeneous, though loftier nature — a divine power acting within the same circle. A mighty religious war, which has shaken all moral existence to its centre, and convulsed it in all its depths, can be completely terminated only by a true religious peace. But such a peace depends on the moral force of principle, and not on the exact measurement of any physical equilibrium. As during the late frightful Revolution, the political relations of every state have been changed, and the whole Balance of Power in Europe been disturbed, no force can now easily alter or replace what has thus been established. Of this, England herself may afford us an example. Certainly that great country in

Southern Asia—the richest of all the countries in the world—and which Great Britain has annexed to her sway, by means of a navy that gives her the empire of the seas, and whose population five or six times exceeds that of the ocean-queen, and equals in numbers the best half of Europe; has brought an accession of strength to England, which can not possibly be measured, judged, or condemned according to the old narrow rules of the system of the Balance of Power; since so many vast and important results have accrued, and in all probability will yet accrue to Europe and India herself from this most singular, and in the history of the world, quite unprecedented connection; and since in other respects, not only the internal administration of Hindostan, but the entire conduct of the English in those transactions, has been at once so wise and glorious. As the shallow, superficial notion of illuminism, which during the greater part of the eighteenth century was considered the all-ruling principle and highest object of all science and speculation, is no longer adequate to the present views of philosophy; in like manner the system of the Balance of Power has ceased to be any longer applicable to the state of Europe in the late general warfare, or to that state of things which it has given rise to; and it is not from this system we can expect the final settlement and adjustment of things, and the solution of the Gordian knot—the great enigma of the world in our times.

After the system of the Balance of Power, the next leading and characteristic principle in the history of the eighteenth century, is the notion of illuminism, which exercised on the internal civilization of all European nations the same influence which the former system exerted on their external relations. People are so accustomed to confound the principle of enlightenment with the abuse and false application made of it during the last century, that in order to represent this great epoch in all its historical bearings, I shall endeavour to shew that to an impartial judge and observer, it offers many and diverse points for consideration. For we must remember that there was a true enlightenment by the side of a false one, and that enlightenment was not every where of a negative character, precipitate in its progress, and destructive in its effects. In its first obscure beginnings, it had a solid, irreproachable, and very beneficial character and tendency. During the public calamities, and general anarchy of the seventeenth century, the natural sciences in all their various branches, made silent but very extraordinary progress; and numberless were the advantages of these new discoveries to all the useful arts and sciences, especially in those commercial and maritime states where such knowledge was mostly needed. A bold, enterprising genius,* heir to the most splendid throne in the North,

* Peter the Great.

had as an apprentice and artisan appropriated on the spot all these advantages of modern civilization, and turned them to full account in navigation, in the various mechanic arts, in the foundation of cities, and in the general civilization of his subjects; and thus he became the founder of the present greatness of Russia;—a greatness which is built on a species of enlightenment, that so far from being of a futile and rash nature, and of a destructive tendency, has exerted a gradual but beneficial influence over the whole extent of an empire, which stretches far into two continents of the globe. It was only by that true and genuine improvement and civilization, which commenced under Peter the Great, that Russia acquired the knowledge and mastery of her own resources, and thus rose to a high and permanent grade in the scale of nations.

The separation of the Russian church from the authority of the Greek patriarch, who had now fallen under Turkish dependance, appeared a necessary condition for opening a door in Russia to the moral and intellectual civilization of Europe; nor when we consider that such a step was but the continuation of an original schism, can we deem it a subject of blame. It does not appear, however, that the system of a *national church*, which has sprung out of this separation, has been here as much abused as in the Anglican church, or in that system of anti-papal opposition nearly akin to it, adopted in

one or more Catholic countries of Europe. The very system, however, of an exclusively national religion, must ever be an object of the greatest solicitude, for it is but too easily susceptible of an extension most fatal to Christian government, which nothing so much impairs and undermines as any leaning to the Mahometan confusion of spiritual and temporal power in the hands of the same person.

Men have often blamed that harsh junction of opposites observable in the sudden and artificial civilization of Russia; that is to say, the contrast which there exists between the highest intellectual luxury, and the most exquisite and fashionable refinement in thought and manners among the higher classes, at the court and in the capital, and the very low grade of civilization, the state of utter or at least semi-barbarism, to which so large a portion of the population are reduced. But no very prejudicial effects have resulted to society in Russia, from this conjunction of elements, and from the obstacles which so many vast masses have opposed to the progress of civilization; and even that hurry and precipitancy in the career of enlightenment, which was the great fault of almost all other European countries, was by this means avoided, or rather prevented by the very nature of things. The only thing here to be apprehended and guarded against was this, that in copying the civilization of Europe, Russia should not introduce along with it those negative and destruc-

tive principles—those maxims of liberalism and irreligion which were almost exclusively prevalent in European literature and science during the eighteenth century; in a word that Protestantism, (in the wide and comprehensive signification of that term,) should not become too predominant in the public mind.

The first ground-work of the modern civilization of Russia, as laid down by Peter the Great, was of a thoroughly practical nature, directed in part to objects of commercial utility, after the manner of the Dutch and English. The moral corruption occasioned by the French philosophy introduced under Catherine II., was confined to a small circle; and in the course of succeeding times, this philosophy came to be considered as an exotic element of destruction, which so far from being adequate to the exigencies of the age, struck at the very root of society. In a more recent period, liberal and Revolutionary theories of government, copied from constitutional countries, may at most have led to a criminal enterprise; but have not exercised any the least permanent influence on the bulk of the nation. But the great and essential point for this European and Asiatic Empire,—the seat of a progressive enlightenment,—as well as for the rest of Europe, is still this—that this enlightenment, which is the basis on which this empire is founded, should never take an irreligious course, but should ever maintain a decidedly religious character. And in this respect,

more than any other, a generous monarch* who became great in the school of adversity, must be considered as the second founder of Russian greatness, because he has stamped on this empire a strong, permanent religious impress. I do not allude here of course to any fanatic measure of coercion, but to the moral influence of religion—to its firm establishment as the general principle of European government in the present times.

The principle of illuminism, when properly conceived, has nothing at all reprehensible in itself, or at variance with the Christian religion. In the same way that Christianity, if not only its dogmas were developed, but its general influence extended, and made triumphant in the world, would soon supplant the existing human Reformation, and be the true, the divine reformation of mankind, of the world, and even of the visible creation; so it is itself the true illumination, whereof Holy Writ speaketh: it is that light of eternal light, which was in the beginning, and which was the life of men, (as the words from the mouth of eternal Truth declare,) and in which men are once more to find their life. But to descend from this lofty idea into the world of historical experience, we should carefully distinguish between a true, lasting, and vivifying illumination, and a false, mimic, and illusive species of enlightenment. One thing is

* The late Emperor Alexander.

the warm, genial light of the sun returning to the new-born spring, or the fresh glow of morning after the lengthened night—and another the transient glimmer of a bonfire, which after exciting a false alarm, sinks rapidly again into darkness. One thing is the solitary midnight lamp of silent meditation — and another the lightning which flashes athwart the gloomy heavens, or the dark lantern of the murderer stealing his way along in the night, or the torch-light in the robbers' cave, where the spoil is divided, and new misdeeds are concerted.

For all these various significations of true and false illumination, the eighteenth century in its real or pretended enlightenment may furnish us with historical proofs. Thus without misapprehending or disowning that true and divine light visible even in the progress of science, or without rejecting, or contracting in too narrow bounds the salutary and necessary light of human reason, still we must be careful to distinguish from the former the light which is illusive, or changeable, as well as that which is spurious, and counterfeited by the powers of darkness.

In this consists the sign of a false enlightenment—if not merely in its origin, and in its outward effects, but in its own nature as well as undeviating course, it retains a negative character, and is therefore hollow and superficial. But any system which is originally destitute of a firm and solid foundation, may easily be driven into an irregular and devious, and ultimately

into a most fatal course. This is in short the essential distinction observable in the progress of a genuine and a spurious species of enlightenment. This illuminism exercised so general an influence in the eighteenth century on church and state, on science and on social life, on the relations of policy and the course of public events, that even Spain and the Papal territories were not exempt from its influence — an influence which was perceptible on the one hand, in many useful reforms in the internal administration of those states—and on the other hand, in the expulsion of the Jesuits, which was first commenced by Portugal and Spain, and to which the jealousy of other religious orders had contributed. But the whole transaction must be ascribed to a destructive party of Illuminati, that had secretly grown up in those countries, and now expanded to public view, and appeared in full power. To such a party those religious orders which had fallen into a state of real degeneracy, inactivity, and ignorance, so far from being objects of hatred, were exceedingly welcome for the promotion of their secret views. But not so an order, which was distinguished for its zeal and activity, its devotion to the interests of the church, its scientific acquirements, and knowledge of the world. A critical enquiry into the truth or falsehood of the several charges and accusations against the Jesuits, must be reserved to a special history of those countries I have named, or to a particular history of the

order. But their expulsion is here mentioned, as it is a very characteristic circumstance in the history of that age of pretended illumination. It may be generally thought that the determination which Pope Ganganelli at last came to for the suppression of the order, was extorted from him by the overruling influence of the secular powers. But if such a supposition be really admissible, it is evident on the other hand, that the restoration of the order was effected by the virtuous Pontiff who ruled the church in the late period of oppression, at the very moment when the iron yoke of military despotism weighed heaviest on the nations of Europe.

The true progress of Christian enlightenment in the pursuits of philosophy and science, I shall have occasion to mention afterwards. The principle of toleration, which was solidly established by the German treaty of religious peace, became an essential element of social illumination. By degrees this principle was admitted throughout almost all Europe—yet we must observe that its adoption cannot be determined by one uniform, invariable rule in all countries, but that local circumstances, respecting which it is often difficult for the distant observer to come to a right judgment, must and ought to produce numerous modifications in the application of the principle. That wide toleration which in Holland and North America has for a long time incorporated into the state a multitude of petty

sects, would not be practicable or expedient in other countries. The religious liberty which in the Russian Empire is extended even to Mahometans, and to certain tribes of Buddhists and Pagans, would not apply to the circumstances of most other civilized countries. There are in the deep-rooted habits of nations, and in the constitution of individual states, very peculiar, and often apparently singular, circumstances and combinations, which no man should judge of hastily, and according to abstract principles, until he has obtained a close, accurate, and deep insight into the historical condition and situation of a country. Thus while England is intolerant in her Constitution at home, she gives the fullest latitude in Canada to the North American principle of religious freedom; and the whole British Empire in India is founded on toleration—that is to say, on the principle of governing the Indians according to their own laws, manners, customs, and opinions. By this policy the English have become almost complete masters of this great and fertile country; and their enlightened rule forms a strong contrast to the earlier tyranny of the Mahometans, who hold the Indian idolatry in the utmost abhorrence; although that idolatry, amid a chaos of errors and fables, contains many better and higher vestiges of ancient truth, than the mere negative and fanatic superstition of Mahomet. Even the French, when they had a firm footing in India, committed a capital fault

in forming alliances more with the Mahometans than with the native Indian powers.

In Europe, Norway alone, among the Protestant states, has maintained down to our times laws of severe exclusion against every religion differing from the established one—an exclusion which extends as well to Jews as to Catholics; while Spain and Portugal only, among Catholic countries, offer an example of similar intolerance. To abolish suddenly without urgent and overpowering reasons, or some new historical emergency, laws which have thus grown out of the general circumstances of a country, which have existed for ages, and have taken deep root in the manners and habits of life, provokes suspicion, and may occasion danger. But we must not suppose that a severe and exclusive system of legislation, like that existing in Spain, can always counteract the occult and far more dangerous opposition of secret sects and societies. This might be proved, or rendered probable by many facts in the history of those countries during the eighteenth century. In Italy this rigid and exclusive legislation was never carried to the same unqualified extent. Intolerance there never extended to the Jews, nor to the Greek schismatics, and in recent times it does not, as formerly, affect the Protestants. In Germany, toleration was legally established by the treaty of Westphalia, and there the cause of toleration stood in no need of the modern principle of illuminism—the all-stirring

and animating principle of the eighteenth century. But here illuminism in its first negative period was directed against prejudices and abuses of another kind. In certain Protestant countries in the North of Germany, this period of illumination dates from the abolition of trials for witchcraft. And against so modest a beginning not the slightest objection could be urged; for in general the criminal law which the later and already degenerate middle age bequeathed to modern times, afforded ample scope for amelioration, and contained many barbarous edicts that deserved to be abolished. The use of torture, and of un-christian and excruciating modes of execution, were next the objects of Reform. The total abolition of capital punishment, which this legal Reform soon aimed at in its ulterior progress, the experience of mankind has not yet found to be either possible or practicable. Who will be disposed to deny that the many abuses which were now corrected, and the many vulgar prejudices which were refuted or done away with, were especially at the outset, in a great measure such as were truly deserving of that name, and that very many of those reforms were useful and necessary, just and wholesome. It appears, however, sometimes, that barbarous abuses thus hastily and precipitately removed, soon reappear under other forms and denominations. This may easily be the case, where those useful and necessary reforms are confined to the outward surface, and do not penetrate to

the roots, and internal essence of things.—It is worthy of remark, that in the absence of solid and positive principles, the mere removal of abuses—a mere negative course of conduct, will never alone attain the desired end, nor is it in itself always safe and certain. Soon a rash and passionate precipitancy will be apparent in the conduct of affairs—the standard and real term of our exertions will be lost sight of, and things will fall into a ruinous course; and such is the character of that period of transition from the age of illuminism to the time of the French Revolution. Was there a single object, not only in the questions relating to humanity, but in the whole department of public life and general belief, in religion and in government, which was not soon regarded as a prejudice or an abuse?

In Germany, when the Empress Maria Theresa ascended the Imperial throne, the long established peace of the empire, which it had once cost such efforts to secure and preserve, appeared to the new school of philosophy, a ridiculous prejudice of unenlightened, pedantic Burghers of state. But fifty years afterwards, during the atheistic and revolutionary period of the French philosophy, immediately prior to the French Revolution, as well as at its commencement, Christianity, and in fact all religion, was considered as a mere prejudice of the infancy of the human mind, totally destitute of foundation in truth, and no longer adapted to the spirit of the age; monarchy and the whole civilization of

modern Europe as abuses no longer to be tolerated. It was only when men had reached this extreme term of their boasted enlightenment, that a re-action took place. But prior to this, towards the middle of the eighteenth century, and in the ten years immediatedly subsequent, the spirit of the age bore all before it in its irresistible progress. As in ancient times, monarchs had competed for the title of Most Christian, or Most Catholic, so now the potentates pre-eminent for power and understanding, were flattered by the title of enlightened. It is not without a great shock to our feelings, we contemplate the close intimacy which subsisted between a monarch grown grey in the toils of war and the cares of state, a powerful Empress of a Northern court, and the most depraved champions of French infidelity. With respect to the third of those eminent potentates of the age of illuminism, Joseph II., it has never been denied by those most competent to form a correct opinion on this subject, that among the various measures and regulations passed in the short reign of that active emperor, although some are not entitled to the same praise, yet many were really adapted to the exigencies of the age, and have been attended with the most beneficial consequences to industry and to intellectual cultivation. But the serious turn which things afterwards took, the universal convulsion, and remodelling of the world, have long fully demonstrated, that not one or two only, but many of the most active and

enlightened sovereigns of that age, yielded far too much to the prevailing principles of the time, and followed too readily the spirit of that age in its wild, rapid, and all-destructive career.

To the many elements of internal ferment already existing in France, the imitation of English manners under the Regent, which was soon succeeded by an imitation of English literature and philosophy, added a source of equal danger. For to maintain within certain prescribed limits this English philosophy that reduces everything to the experience of sensation, the French wanted that sense of equilibrium innate in the English, and which their constitution had rendered almost instinctive to them; and by means of which in philosophy, as in their internal government, and in their relations with Foreign states, they can keep within bounds; and with them a philosophy, however unspiritual and ungodly, does not so rapidly rush into a headlong and destructive course, as it did in France and in Europe during the atheistical and revolutionary period of literature and science; for the deadly influence of this spirit was not confined to France—the land of its birth—but spread over every country. This is the important and essential distinction between the philosophy of Locke or of Hume for example, which I before designated as the Protestantism of philosophy, in opposition to the thoroughly revolutionary philosophy of French atheism — for though the former by its opposition to all spiritual ideas is of a

negative character, yet most of its partisans and champions contrive to make some sort of capitulation with divine faith, and to preserve a kind of belief in moral feeling. The French philosophy was in fact a new Pagan idolatry of nature, and even the most splendid discoveries of natural science, which might and ought to have pointed to a higher principle, were not contemplated in their true spirit, nor employed to proper advantage, but were even made the instruments of a fanatic hostility towards the Deity. Even among the comparatively better natural philosophers of France, materialism was too generally the basis of their science, and a sensual enthusiasm for nature too much the prevailing tone of their writings.

The more brilliant the talents which led the way in this new impious and Revolutionary career of the European mind, the more generally pernicious was the result. Such was the case with that scoffer, whose genius could adapt itself to all the forms, moods, and styles of the old French literature, and who wielding, as he did, with so masterly a hand the weapon of a lawless wit, directed it without intermission during his whole life against everything holy and venerable, of what nature and kind soever. As those errors are the most dangerous, which as containing a portion of truth, carry with them a greater power of conviction; so Rousseau has perhaps exercised a more fatal influence than that other spirit, who with his

mockery polluted all things. We cannot pre cisely term him un-christian—at least such an epithet cannot be applied to him in the same unqualified and universal extent — and when compared with the Atomical philosophy and the Atheistical idolatry of nature, his fanatic worship of nature will be found of a more spiritual cast. The great eloquence of this man entitles him perhaps as clearly to the first rank among the orators of his nation during the eighteenth century, as Bossuet with very different religious principles holds in his own age. Eloquence less powerful than Rousseau's could not well have sufficed to draw his age into an admiration for that savage equality which he preached up—to have excited its enthusiasm for the state of the Caribees and the Iroquois, which, looking back with regret to man's original happiness in the pure freedom of nature, he represented as his proper destiny, utterly marred as he was, by European civilization. This was not a mere idle freak of imagination, such as any false enchantment of romance might display — but Rousseau endeavoured to demonstrate with all the rigid deductions of mathematical proof, the happy equality of the savage state; and with the most earnest conviction and blind fanaticism, his system was applied to the actual relations of life. The result was that period of godless freedom—freedom separated from God and from every divine principle whether of conduct or belief, and which, as usual,

was soon succeeded by the false unity of a crushing despotism, equally hostile to every heavenly and exalted motive of human action. But such has been the frightfully accelerated march of events in these latter times, that the former stages of the Revolutionary course in ancient Rome—the attempt of the elder Brutus —the establishment of a Republic—the wars with the rival Carthage—the rapid career of military conquests—and the transition to despotism, down to Tiberius or Dioclesian—have been here traversed in the short period of scarcely one generation. It would be unjust always to term this the French Revolution, or to consider it exclusively as such—it was a general political malady—an universal epidemic of the age. In Holland and Belgium a Revolution had previously broken out—the Polish Revolution occurred about the same time; but though the Belgian, and more particularly the Polish Revolutions were of a totally different character from the French, they still presented to the turbulent spirit of the age, one example more of political commotion. But North America had been to France and the rest of Europe, the real school and nursery of all these Revolutionary principles. Natural contagion, or wilful propagation spread this disorder over many other countries—but France continued to be the centre and general focus of Revolution.

Even when the whole power of the Revolution had been concentrated in the person of a

single man, its general march was not materially changed. With respect to Foreign states and countries, the French Revolution produced a protracted religious war of twenty-one years; for it was such not only from its origin, but from its Revolutionary and destructive character, and from its fanatic opposition to everything holy. There was a fixed principle at the bottom of this modern Paganism. It was political idolatry—and it matters little what may be the immediate object of this idolatry—what the idol of the day, whether a Republic and the goddess of reason—the grande nation—or the lust of conquest and the glory of arms. It is still the same demon of political destruction — the same anti-christian spirit of government, which wishes to mislead the age, and control the world. The great religious war, which has desolated all Europe, can be finally terminated only by a new and general religious peace :—but the great gulph of perdition to our age is that political idolatry, whatever shape it may assume — whatever name it may bear. Until that idolatry be abolished, until that abyss of ruin be closed up, the house of the Lord, where peace and righteousness embrace each other, can never be founded on a renovated earth.

END OF LECTURE XVII.

LECTURE XVIII.

On the general spirit of the age, and on the universal Regeneration of Society.

"I come soon, and will renew all things."

THERE are in the history of the eighteenth century, many phenomena which occurred so suddenly, so instantaneously, so contrary to all expectation, that although on deeper consideration we may discover their efficient causes in the past, in the natural state of things, and in the general situation of the world, yet are there many circumstances which prove that there was a deliberate, though secret, preparation of events, as, indeed, in many instances has been actually demonstrated. I must now say a few words on this secret and mysterious branch of Illuminism, and on the progress it made during the period of its sway, in order to complete the sketch of that period, and to shew the

influence of this principle, both in regard to the origin and general spirit of the Revolution, (which in its fanaticism believed itself a regeneration of the world), and in regard to the true restoration of society founded on the basis of Christian justice. But there is this peculiar circumstance in this historical enquiry, that those who as eye-witnesses could best speak from their personal experience, cannot always be considered the most credible vouchers; for we never know, or can know what their particular views and interests may lead them to say or conceal, to suppress wholly or in part. However it has so happened, that in the universal convulsion and overthrow of society, many things have come to light on this mysterious and esoteric clue in modern history — things which when combined together, furnish us with a not incorrect, and a tolerably complete idea of this mighty element of the Revolution, and of Illuminism both true and false, which has exercised so evident and various an influence on the world. And it is only on such historical grounds (which are quite sufficient for our purpose, and can alone be made the matter of consideration here), I am at all competent to pronounce an opinion on this subject, or, as I should rather say, to give an account of this event; and it is from historical sources, references and facts alone, that the following sketch has been taken.

As to the origin of this esoteric influence,

the impartial historical enquirer cannot doubt (whatever motives or views some may have to deny the fact, or throw doubt on its authenticity), that the order of Templars was the channel by which this society in its ancient and long preserved form was introduced into the West. The religious *Masonic* symbols may be accounted for by the Solomonian traditions connected with the very foundation of the order of Templars; and indeed the occasion of these symbols may be traced in other passages of Holy Writ, and in other parts of sacred history, and they may very well admit of a Christian interpretation. Traces of these symbols may be found in the monuments of the old German architecture of the middle age. Any secret spiritual association, however, diffused at once among Christians and Mahometans, cannot be of a very Christian nature, nor long continue so. Nay the very idea of an esoteric society for the propagation of any secret doctrines is not compatible with the very principle of Christianity itself; for Christianity is a divine mystery, which according to the intention of its divine Founder, lies open to all, and is daily exposed on every altar. For this reason, in a Revelation imparted to all alike, there can be no secrecy, as in the Pagan mysteries, where by the side of the popular mythology and the public religion of the state, certain esoteric doctrines were inculcated to the initiated only. This would be to constitute a church within a church —a measure to be as little tolerated or justified,

as an Imperium in Imperio; and in an age where worldly interests and public or secret views of policy have far greater ascendancy than religious opinions or sentiments, such a secret parasitical church would unquestionably, as experience has already proved, be very soon transformed into a secret directory for political changes and Revolutions. That in this society the un-christian principles of a negative Illuminism, veiled as they often were in sentiments of universal philanthropy, were of a date tolerably modern, all historical analogies would lead us to suppose. On the other hand, the Christian opinions which survived in this order, (though in our times, amid the innumerable factions which have agitated this society by their contests, the adherents to Christian principles form a small minority of its members,) the Christian opinions surviving in this order partook, conformably to the historical origin I have assigned, more of an oriental and Gnostic character. The great, or at least, not inconsiderable influence which this society exercises in politics, we may discover in those Revolutions, which after having convulsed our quarter of the globe, have rolled onwards to the new world, where the two principal Revolutionary factions in one of those South American states, whose troubles are not yet terminated, are called the Scots and the Yorkists, from the two parties which divide the English Masonic lodges. Who does not know, or who does not remember, that the ruler of the

world in the period just passed, made use of this vehicle in all the countries he conquered, to delude and deceive the nations with false hopes. And on this account he was styled by his partisans the man of his age, and in fact he was a slave to the spirit of his age. A society, from whose bosom, as from the secret laboratory of Revolution, the Illuminés, the Jacobins, and the Carbonari, have successively proceeded, cannot possibly be termed, or be in fact very beneficial to mankind, politically sound, or truly Christian in its views and tendency. Still I must here observe, that it has been the fate of the oldest of all secret societies, that its venerable forms which are known to all the initiated, should serve as a cloak to every new conspiracy. In the next place, we must not forget that this order itself appears to be split and divided into a multitude of different sects and factions; and that on this account we must not suppose that all those fearful aberrations, and wild excesses of impiety, all those openly destructive or secretly undermining principles of Revolution were universally approved of by this society. On the contrary, such a supposition would be utterly false, or at least, very exaggerated. The mere notice of all the highly estimable characters, mistaken but on this point—of most distinguished and illustrious personages in the eighteenth century, members of this association,—would suffice to annul, or at least materially modify, this sweeping censure. From many indications,

we may consider it certain, or at least extremely probable, that in no country did this esoteric society so well harmonize with the state and the whole established order of things, as in that country where all the conflicting elements of morals and society are brought into a sort of strange and artificial equipoise—I mean England. If now we turn our view to the Continent of Europe, and even to those countries which were the chief theatre of the Revolution, we shall see that there, among many other factions, a Christian party had sprung up in this society —a party which, though it formed a very small minority in point of numbers, possessed by its profounder doctrines, and the interesting fragments of ancient tradition it had preserved, a great moral ascendancy; and this many historical facts, and many written documents, which have since obtained publicity, place beyond the shadow of a doubt. Instead of bringing forward the names of some German writers less generally known, I prefer to allege, in confirmation of what I have said, the example of a French writer, who well denotes the internal and more hidden character of the Revolution. The Christian theosophist, St. Martin, who was a disciple of this school, stands in his age quite apart from the other organs of the then prevailing Atheistical philosophy. He was however a most decided Revolutionist, (but a disinterested fanatic, guided entirely in his conduct by high and moral motives), from his utter contempt and

abhorrence for the whole moral and political system of Europe, as it then stood—a contempt in which, if we cannot entirely agree with him, we cannot in many instances withhold from him at least a sort of negative approbation — and, secondly, he was a Revolutionist by his enthusiastic hope of a complete Christian regeneration of society, conceived indeed according to his own views, or the views of his party. Among the French writers of the Restoration, none have so thoroughly understood this remarkable philosopher, and so well known how to appreciate him in all the depths of his errors, as well as in the many excellent things which his writings contain, and to apply to him the necessary corrections, as Count Maistre.

This secret clue in the history of the Revolution must not be overlooked, if we would wish to form a due estimate of its character; for it greatly contributed to the illusion of many, by no means ill-intentioned persons, who saw or wished to see in the Revolution but the inevitable, necessary, though in its origin, harsh and severe, regeneration of Christian states and nations, then so widely gone off from their original destination. This illusive notion of a false restoration of society was particularly prevalent during the Imperial sway of that extraordinary man, whose true biography—I mean the high moral law of his destiny, or the theological key to his life—seems still to exceed the critical powers of our age. Seven years were allotted

him for the growth of his power—for fourteen years the world was delivered over into his hands; and seven years were left him for solitary reflection, the first of which he misemployed in embroiling the world anew. On the use he made of the extraordinary power that had been imparted to him—of that formidable dominion which had fallen to his lot, history has long pronounced her sentence. Never is suchpower permitted but in the period of, and with a view to, some awful reckoning, and a still more fearful probation of mankind. But if his Restoration—that is to say, the Restoration which his infatuated partisans attributed to him, was most certainly a false one; — the question naturally occurs, whether the Restoration attempted by his successors has been perfectly sound, or at least quite complete; and what may be the defects in the new system, and how they may be supplied?

A mere treaty of territorial arrangements could not and can never constitute a great religious and international pacification for the whole of Europe. The re-establishment of subverted thrones—the Restoration of exiled sovereigns and dynasties, will not in themselves have any security nor permanence, unless based on moral principles and maxims. After the severe unexpected lesson again inflicted on Europe, religion was at last made the basis of European policy; and we must not make it a matter of reproach, that this principle still retained so

indefinite a character; for this was necessary at the beginning at least, in order to remove any misconception, or any possible suspicion of interested views. And not only doth the stability and future existence of the whole Christian and civilized world depend on this bond of religious confederacy,—which we can only hope may be ever more and more firmly knit—but every great power in particular is more especially called upon to take a part therein. That the moral strength and stability of the Russian Empire mainly depends on religion—that every departure from its sacred spirit must have the most fatal effects on its whole system, has already been declared by her late monarch, distinguished alike in adverse and in prosperous fortune, an axiom of state-policy, and can scarcely ever be again forgotten. But in that country, where the elements of Protestantism (to use that word in its most comprehensive signification) obtained such weight in the outset of its literary refinement, and are so incorporated with the whole political system of the state, the toleration extended to every form of worship, should not be withheld from that church, which is the mother-church of the rest of Europe, and of Poland inclusively;* nor should the religious liberty of individuals be in that respect at all restricted.

It is equally evident that in that country of

* What a melancholy foreboding is contained in these words!—*Trans.*

Europe where monarchy has been restored, the restoration of religion must go hand in hand with that of monarchy, and that the latter would lose all security were the former removed. In the pacific monarchy,* unchangeably attached as she is to her ancient principles, religion has ever been, more than any other principle, the recognised basis of her existence. As to the fifth† Germanico-European monarchy recently created, the solid maintenance of religion is the only means to allay the disquiet incident to such a state, and to secure its future existence. Any act of even indirect hostility towards the Catholic body—one half of the nation‡—any infringement on the liberty of individuals in that sacred concern—a liberty which must be guaranteed not only by the letter of the law, but by real, effective and practical measures — would not only be in utter opposition to those religious principles, rapidly spreading as they are in all Europe, and particularly in Germany; but would violate and render insecure the great fundamental and long established principle of toleration; as has hitherto been acknowledged. It is only in England that Anglicanism has raised her doubts as to the utility of a religious fraternity among the Christian states and nations—

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* Austria. † Prussia.

‡ Schlegel here conveys an indirect censure on the Prussian government, for some acts of an intolerant nature towards its Catholic subjects.—*Trans.*

doubts which are connected with the still exclusively Protestant character of the English Constitution, and which on many occasions may lead England to a sort of schismatical rupture with the rest of Europe. On several occasions we must contemplate with regret, how that mighty England, in the eighteenth century so brilliant and so powerful by the sway she exerted over the whole European mind, no longer seems to feel herself at home in the nineteenth century, nor to know where to find her place in the new order of things.

But as respects Europe at large, the maxims and principles of liberalism are only a partial return to the Revolution — they can have no other tendency but to Revolution. Liberalism will never obtain a majority among the well-thinking persons of any of the European states, except by some gross error—some singular degeneracy in that party, which really does not constitute a party, and ought not to be called such—I mean the men who in politics are attached to monarchy, and in religion to Christianity.

The mere principle of a mechanical Balance of Power to serve as a negative check on overgrown dominion — a system which emanated from England, and was in the eighteenth century universally received—has ceased to be applicable, or to be of service to the existing state of things in Europe; for all the remedies which it can offer, tend only to aggravate the evil when it has once occurred. In religion alone are to

be found the remedies and the safeguards, the emancipation and consolidation of the whole civilized world, as well as of every particular state. The most imminent danger to our age, and the possible abuse of religion itself, are the excesses of the absolute. Great is the danger, when in a vindictive spirit of re-action, a revolutionary conduct is adopted by the party of legitimacy; when passion itself is consecrated into a maxim of reason, and held up as the only valid and just mode of proceeding; and when the sacredness of religion itself is hawked about as some fashionable opinion; as if the world-redeeming power of faith and truth consisted in the mere dead letter, and in the recited formula. True life can spring only from the vivifying spirit of eternal truth. In science the absolute is the abyss which swallows up the living truth, and leaves behind only the hollow idea, and the dead formula. In the political world the absolute in conduct and speculation is that false spirit of time, opposed to all good and to the fulness of divine truth, which in a great measure rules the world, and may entirely rule it, and lead it for ever to its final ruin. As errors would not be dangerous or deceptive, and would have little effect, unless they contained a portion or appearance of truth; this false spirit of time which successively assumes all forms of destruction, since it has abandoned the path of eternal truth, consists in this--it withdraws particular

facts from their historical connection, and holds them up as the centre and term of a system, without any limitation, and without any regard to historical circumstances. The true foundation, and the right term of things, in the history of society as in the lives of individuals, cannot be thus severed from their historical connection, and their place in the natural order of events. In any speculation or enterprise conducted by this passionate spirit of exaggeration, the living spirit must evaporate, and only the dead and deadening formula survive. What idols may successively be worshipped by the changing spirit of time which easily bounds from one extreme to another, cannot be determined before-hand. It is even possible that for a while eternal truth itself may be profaned and perverted to such an idol of the day —I mean the counterfeit form of truth;—for the spirit of time, however it may assume the garb, can never attain the inward essence and living energy of truth. Whatever may be the alternate idol, and the reigning object of its worship, or of its passionate rhetoric, it still remains essentially the same—that is to say, the absolute, alike deadening to intellect, and destructive to life. In science, the absolute is the idol of vain and empty systems, of dead and abstract reason.

The Christian faith has the living God and his revelation for its object, and is itself that revelation; hence every doctrine taken from this

source is something real and positive. The defence of truth against error will then only be attended with permanent success, when the divine doctrine, in whatever department it may be, is represented with intellectual energy as a living principle; and at the same time placed in its historical connection, with a due regard to every other historical reality. This calm, historical judgment of things — this acute insight into subjects, whether they be real facts or intellectual phenomena—is the invariable concomitant of truth, and the indispensable condition to the full knowledge of truth. This is the more so, indeed, as religion, which forms the basis of all truth, and of all knowledge, naturally traces with attentive eye the mysterious clue of Divine Providence and Divine permission through the long labyrinth of human errors and human follies, be they of a practical or a speculative nature. Error, on the other hand, is always unhistorical; the spirit of time almost always passionate; and both consequently untrue. The conflict against error cannot be brought to a prompter and more successful issue, than by separating in every system of moral and speculative error, and according to the standard of divine truth, the absolute, which is the basis of such systems, into its two component parts of truth and falsehood. For when we acknowledge and point out the truth to be found in those systems, there only remains error, whose inanity it requires little labour, little cost of talent, or

time to expose and make evident to every eye. But in real life the struggle of parties often ceases to be purely intellectual—their physical energy is displayed in violent commotions; and in proportion as all parties become absolute, so their struggle becomes one of violent and mutual destruction — a circumstance which most fatally impedes the great work of religious regeneration—the mighty problem of our age, which so far from being brought to a satisfactory termination, is not yet even solved. In this respect it is no doubt a critical fact, that in certain quarters of European life, nay even in some entire countries, parties and governments should be more and more carried away by the spirit of absolutism. For this is not a question of names, and it is very evident that not those parties, which are called, or call themselves absolute, are the most so in reality; since now, as in all periods of violent party struggles, a whimsical mistake in names, a great disorder of ideas, and a Babel confusion of tongues, occur even in those languages otherwise distinguished for their clearness and precision.

Fixedness of principle, consistency in reasoning, firmness of character, and the severe, dogmatic precision of faith, as these are the qualities which form the best test of man in the intercourse of life, so they ought by no means to be confounded with absolutism either in conduct or speculation; for all these qualities are very compatible with the calm historical judg-

ment of things, and a conscientious regard for all historical circumstances. Among the French writers of recent times who have devoted themselves to the task of the religious regeneration of the public mind, no one possesses the above-named qualities in a higher, or in so remarkable a degree, as Count Maistre; and yet of all the writers of this class, he is the least open to the charge of promoting a passionate spirit of re-action; and in my own opinion, he must be entirely acquitted of such an imputation. Some more rhetorical defenders, however, of religion in France, cannot certainly be entirely absolved from the charge of favouring this absolute and exaggerated spirit of re-action; and so they unquestionably, even more than their opponents, injure the cause which they wish to defend. But many imputations of this sort which party spirit has alleged, are entirely without foundation; as when the opposition in the country I speak of, extends to the government, and to all the different ministries since the Restoration, the charge of political absolutism, and of a spirit of re-action; every one must clearly see that no cause has really been given for such imputations. And that in a country where the most hostile parties and all conceivable opinions are tolerated, a small number of Jesuits should partake of the general toleration, is a circumstance that can excite blame, jealousy and hypocritical alarm, only in the breasts of men animated by the unjust and vindictive spirit of faction. To

the distant and impartial observer, the greatest and most imminent danger to France appears to be a relapse to Revolution by means of liberalism.*

The dogmatic decision and definiteness of Catholic faith on the one hand, and the firmly rooted private convictions of Protestantism on the other, are very compatible with an historical judgment of historical events. Difficult as this may appear to the absolute spirit of our age, it is this very historical impartiality which must prepare the way for the complete triumph of truth, and the consummate glory of Christianity. And it is in this consists the great distinction between true toleration and the fatal indifferentism of our age, and of the age immediately preceding. True toleration is founded on the humble and consequently religious principle and firm hope, that while one leaves in quiet what has already an historical existence, God will conduct and arrange all things, and bring them to their appointed end. This is widely remote from that pretended equality of all religions, provided they inculcate but a good morality—a system which strikes at the root of all religion. Intolerance, on the other hand, is grounded in the proud, and therefore impious opinion, that it can mould all things to what it fancies they ought to be, without any regard to the limits of

* This was spoken exactly two years before the French Revolution of July, 1830.—*Trans.*

human weakness — and without reflecting that what is put down by outward force, not unfrequently grows up in secret in an altered, though still more dangerous, form. Of this truth, it would not be difficult to adduce many historical proofs.

In the absolute spirit of our age, and in the absolute character of its factions, there is a deep-rooted intellectual pride, which is not so much personal or individual, as social, for it refers to the historical destiny of mankind, and of this age in particular. Actuated by this pride, a spirit exalted by moral energy, or invested with external power, fancies it can give a real existence to that which can only be the work of God: as from him alone proceed all those mighty, and real regenerations of the world, among which Christianity—a revolution in the high and divine sense of the word—occupies the first place; and in these plastic moments, every thing is possible that man can wish or dare to hope, if in what he adds on his own part, he mars not much in what the bounteous monarch of the universe, from the overflowings of his ineffable love, outpours upon his earth. For the last three hundred years this human pride has been at work—a pride that wishes to originate events, instead of humbly awaiting them, and of resting contented with the place assigned to it among those events, and of making the best and most charitable use of those circumstances which Providence has decreed.

What I said before with regard to the Reformation may be equally applied to the principle and period of Illuminism. The idea itself is perfectly blameless, and it is unfair to pronounce on it an indiscriminate censure, and to treat it as an unqualified abuse. It was indeed but a very small portion of this illuminism of the eighteenth century, that was really derived from the truths of Christianity, and the pure light of Revelation. The rest was the mere work of man, consequently vain and empty, or at least defective, corrupt in parts, and, on the whole, destitute of a solid foundation, and therefore devoid of all permanent strength and duration.

But when once, after the complete victory of truth, the divine Reformation shall appear;—then that human Reformation, which till now hath existed, will sink to the ground, and disappear from the world. Then by the universal triumph of Christianity, and the thorough religious regeneration of the age, of the world, and of governments themselves, will dawn the era of a true Christian *Illuminism*. This period is not perhaps so remote from our own, as the natural indolence of the human mind, which after every great occurrence, loves to sink again into the death-sleep of ordinary life, would be disposed to believe. Yet must this exalted religious hope—this high historical expectation be coupled with great apprehension, as to the full display of divine justice in the world. For how is such a religious

regeneration possible, until every species, form, and denomination of political idolatry be eradicated, and entirely extirpated from the earth?

Never was there a period that pointed so strongly, so clearly, so generally towards the future, as our own. On this account we should endeavour clearly and accurately to distinguish between what on the one hand man may by slow, progressive, but unweared exertions—by the pacific adjustment of all disputed points—and by the cultivation of his intellectual qualities, contribute towards the great work of the religious regeneration of government and science—and what on the other hand he should look for in silent awe from a higher Providence—from the new creative fiat of a last period of consummation, unable as he is to produce or call it forth. We are directed much more towards the future than towards the past;—but in order to comprehend in all its magnitude the problem of our age, it sufficeth not that we should seek this social regeneration in the eighteenth century—an age in no respect entitled to praise—or in the reign of Lewis the Fourteenth, and his times of false national glory. The birth of Christianity must be the great point of survey to which we must recur, not to bring back, or counterfeit the forms of ages past, which are no longer applicable to our own; but clearly to examine what has remained incomplete, what has not yet been attained. For unquestionably, all that has been neglected in the earlier periods and stages of

Christian civilization, must be made good in this true, consummate regeneration of society. If truth is to obtain a complete victory—if Christianity is really to triumph on the earth—then must the state become Christian, and science become Christian. But these two objects have never been generally, nor completely realized; although during the many ages mankind have been Christian, they have struggled for the attainment of both; and though this political struggle and this intellectual aspiration form the purport of modern history. The Roman Empire, even after the true religion had become predominant, was too thoroughly and radically corrupt, ever to form a truly Christian state. The sound, unvitiated natural energy of the Germanic nations, seemed far better fitted for such a destiny, after they had received from Christianity a high religious consecration for this purpose. There was, if we may so speak, in the interior of each state, as well as in the general system of Christendom, a most magnificent foundation laid for a truly Christian structure of government. But this ground-work remained unfinished, after the internal divisions in the state, then the divisions between church and state, and lastly, the divisions in the church and in religion itself, had interrupted the successful beginnings of a most glorious work.

The ecclesiastical writers of the first ages furnish a solid foundation for all the future labours of Christian science; but their science

does not comprehend all the branches of human knowledge. In the middle age, undoubtedly, this foundation of a Christian science, laid down by the early fathers, was slowly prosecuted and in detail; but on the whole, many hurtful influences of the time had reduced science and speculation to a very low ebb, when suddenly in the fifteenth century all the literary treasures of ancient Greece, and all the new discoveries in geography and physics, were offered to philosophy. Scarcely had philosophy begun to examine these mighty stores of ancient and modern science, in order to give them a Christian form, and to appropriate them to the use of religion and modern society, when the world again broke out into disputes; and this noble beginning of a Christian philosophy was interrupted, and has since remained an unfinished fragment for a later and a happier period. Such then is the two-fold problem of a real and complete regeneration which our age is called upon to solve;—on one hand, the further extension of Christian government, and of Catholic principles of legislation, in opposition to the Revolutionary spirit of the age, and to the anti-Christian principle of government hitherto so exclusively prevalent; and on the other hand the establishment of a Christian philosophy, or Catholic science. As I before characterized the political spirit of the eighteenth century by the term—Protestantism of state (taking that word in a purely philoso-

phic sense, and not as a religious designation)—a system which found its one main support in an old Catholic Empire;* and as I characterized the intellectual spirit of the same age by the term Protestantism of science;—a science which made the greatest progress and exerted the widest influence in another† great Catholic country; systems in which nothing irreligious was originally intended, but which became so by their too exclusive or negative bearing: so I may here permit myself to say, in like manner, that the destiny of this age—the peculiar want of the nineteenth century, is the establishment of those Catholic principles of government, and the general construction of a Catholic system of science. This expression is used in a mere scientific sense, and refers to all that is positively and completely religious in thought and feeling. In the certain conviction that this cannot be misunderstood in an exclusive or polemical sense, I will expressly add that this foundation of Catholic legislation for the future political existence of Europe may be laid by one, or more than one, non-catholic power; and that I even cherish the hope, that it is our own Germany, one half whereof is Protestant, which more than any other country is destined to complete the fabric of Catholic science, and of a true Christian philosophy in all the departments of human knowledge.

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* Austria. † France.

'The religious hope of a true and complete regeneration of the age, by a Christian system of government and a Christian system of science, forms the conclusion to this Philosophy of History. The bond of a religious union between all the European states will be more closely knit, and be more comprehensive, in proportion as each nation advances in the work of its own religious regeneration, and carefully avoids all relapse to the old revolutionary spirit—all worship of the false idols of mistaken freedom, or illusive glory, and rejects every other new form or species of political idolatry. For it is the very nature of political idolatry to lead to the mutual destruction of parties, and consequently it can never possess the elements of stability.

Philosophy, as it is the vivifying centre of all other sciences, must be the principal concern and the highest object of the labours of Christian science. Yet history, which is so closely and so variously connected with religion, must by no means be forgotten, nor must historical research be separated from philosophic speculation. On the contrary, it is the religious spirit and views already pervading the combined efforts of historical learning and philosophic speculation, that chiefly distinguish this new era of a better intellectual culture, or as I should rather express myself, this first stage of a return to the great religious restoration. And I may venture to assert that this spirit, at least in the

present century, has become ever more and more the prevailing characteristic of German science, and on this science, in its relation to the moral wants, and spiritual calling of the nineteenth century, I have now a few observations to make. Like an image reflected in a mirror, or like those symptoms which precede and announce a crisis in human events, the centre-point of all government, or the religious basis of legislation, is sure to be reflected in the whole mental culture, or in the most remarkable intellectual productions of a nation. In England, the equilibrium of a constitution that combines in itself so many conflicting elements, is reflected in its philosophy. The revolutionary spirit was prevalent in the French literature of the eighteenth century long before it broke out in real life; and the struggle is still very animated between the intellectual defenders and champions of the monarchical and religious Restoration, and of the newly awakened liberal opposition. In like manner, as the German people were, and still are, half Catholic and half Protestant, it is religious peace which in all literature, and particularly in philosophy, forms the basis of their modern intellectual culture. The mere æsthetic part of German letters, as regards art and poetry,—that artist-like enthusiasm peculiar to our nation—the struggles which convulsed the infancy of our literature—the successive imitation and rejection of the French and English models

the very general diffusion of classical learning—the newly enkindled love for our native speech, and for the early history of our country, and its elder monuments of art—all these are subjects of minor interest in the European point of view we here take, and form but the prelude and introduction to that higher German science and philosophy, which is now more immediately the subject of our enquiries. Historical research should never be separated from any philosophy, still less from the German; as historical erudition is the most effectual counterpoise to that absolute spirit, so prevalent in German science and German speculation.

Art and poetry constitute that department of intellect wherein every nation should mostly follow the impulse of its own spirit, its own feelings, and its own turn of fancy; and we must regard it as an exception when the poetry of any particular nation (such, for instance, as that of the English at the present day), is felt and received by other nations as an European poetry. On the other hand, history is a sort of intellectual common open to all European nations. The English, who in this department were ever so active and distinguished, have, in very recent times, produced works on their own national history, which really merit the name of classical monuments of the new religious restoration. Science in general, and philosophy in particular, should never be exclusive or national

—should never be called English or German—but should be general and European. And if this is not so entirely the case as in the nature of things it ought to be—we must ascribe it to the defects of particular forms. Of this truth the example of the French language may convince us; for no one will deny the metaphysical profundity of Count Maistre, or the dialectic perspicacity of the Viscount De Bonald. Although those absolute principles which appear to characterize the European nations at this time, have much less influence on real life and on the social relations in Germany than in any other country; yet the false spirit of the absolute seems to be quite native to German science and philosophy; and for a long period, has been the principal cause which has cramped the religious spirit and feelings so natural to the German character, or at least has given them a false direction.

With regard to religious opinions, Protestantism in Germany has not been split into a multitude of new, various, and jarring sects, as in other countries, such as England, Holland, and North America, where it was exclusively or for the most part predominant; for even the Hernhutters were not properly a sect. It is only very recently the Pietists have formed themselves into a party opposed to the Rationalists —but their doctrines are not sufficiently precise and determinate to constitute them a sect, according to the proper signification of that word.

Pietism consists rather in a deep, though vague, sentiment of religion, and in a fusion of various and opposite religious views and doctrines. Undoubtedly this moral fusion of opinions, as well as that outward complication of the interests and doctrines of Catholicism and Protestantism, and of so many private views in matters of religion, produced many wild and fanciful abortions peculiar to the age; many pure idiosyncrasies among the Protestants, whether they made half advances towards the Catholic church, or pursued the opposite path of absolute individualism—or among the Catholics still more monstrous amalgamations—Protestant or semi-Protestant innovations in doctrine aimed at by individuals — innovations which originated in the principles of Illuminism, and were countenanced by the well-known policy of certain sovereigns. Much as we may feel disposed, or are even bound to oppose with all our might, such moral abortions, when the question regards their practical operation—yet I do not think we ought to pronounce an absolutely unfavourable judgment on their general intellectual tendency. The real primary evil of the eighteenth century —an utter indifference for all religious doctrines and concerns,—the dangerous spirit of complete indifferentism, from whose contagion many purely Catholic countries did not escape, took less strong hold in Germany, and obtained less general diffusion than in any other country. A deep, indelible religious feeling still continued

to characterize the German nation, and to give a tone to its philosophical speculations. We should not pay too much attention to some transient and partial paradoxes:—I well recollect the words of an old, very experienced, pious, and enlightened ecclesiastic, who well understood the German character, and who used to say; still, we don't give a religion to the Germans, they will make one out for themselves. And even in the greatest errors of their philosophy, a certain religious bearing and tendency can easily be pointed out. However in a country like Germany, where religious opinions and interests are so various and so intermixed, a long time must elapse before a profound philosophy, which would satisfy these yearnings of religious desire, can attain its full moral developement, or assume a clear outward tangible form. If I before said of the English, in reference to the struggle going on between the conflicting elements of their government—a struggle which in one form or other every great European nation has to settle in its own interior, and to bring to a successful issue—that it would appear by many expressions in their parliamentary proceedings, from those in particular at the head of affairs, and who are best acquainted with them, that a secret self-apprehension besets the minds of English politicians;—so I may now say of our German nation, among whom the conflict lies principally, or more immediately in the sphere of religion and philosophy; that more

than all other nations the Germans are destitute of self-knowledge and of mutual concord; and the cause of this must be sought for in the unfulfilment of their religious and philosophical destiny, and in the yet unallayed discord between opposite elements of faith and various systems of science.

In the first period of German literature, the Protestants had quite the preponderance; but since then, the balance, at least in science, has been completely restored. I speak here of internal religious principles, and not of outward confessions of faith, which cannot be made the criterion for a philosophic classification. For otherwise by descending into details, I might cite, among the few quite irreligious organs of German philosophy, some writers (happily rare exceptions) who belonged to Catholic Germany; and on the other hand, among those foremost and most distinguished in reviving the pure Platonic philosophy, and whose profound religious conceptions have given quite a Christian form to natural philosophy itself, I might adduce the names of men who were members of the Protestant church. Philosophy itself has not to determine, nor to illustrate religious dogmas, nor does it stand in immediate connection with them. The main point to which I wish to direct attention, and which is necessary to render philosophy Christian; is that an internal harmony or unison should be preserved between faith and science; next that the principle of

divine revelation should be regarded as the basis, not only of theology but of every other science; and lastly, that even nature herself should be studied and investigated by this high religious light, and thus made to receive from science a new and transparent lustre. The modern German philosophy even in its infancy, when it was yet pretty closely allied to the English school, and mostly started with the same problems (though it gave to these a deeper and a wider solution), aimed at this harmony between faith and science. It understood both indeed in the very limited sense of a mere faith of reason and science of reason, influenced as it was by the Rationalism then so generally diffused, not only in Protestant but even in Catholic countries, and notably in Catholic Germany. But at the same time other profound thinkers sought another and higher foundation for philosophy in the idea of revelation; a revelation which some understood in a mere general and speculative, though not irreligious, sense—and others in the Christian sense of positive faith and pious feeling. The capital vice of German philosophy is the absolute—the philosophic reflection of the general vice of the spirit of the age, which exerts an absolute influence on life itself—whether this vice of German philosophy assume the form of the absolute ego,* or that of the

* Schlegel alludes to the philosophy of Fichte, which was *an ideal subjective Pantheism.*

Pantheistic naturalism,* or that of absolute reason.† It is this which originally gave to the natural philosophy of the Germans a false Pantheistic direction, for the real materialism which has found so many advocates among the French Naturalists, has from the very ideal tendency of the German mind, experienced little favour in Germany. Yet this foreign influence was not of long continuance—German physics became deeply imbued with a religious spirit, and the German natural philosophy is now in the hands of its first representatives decidedly Christian. And this progress in the great work of the religious regeneration of science, I must consider as the noblest triumph of genius, for it is precisely in the department of physics the problem was the most difficult; and all that rich and boundless treasure of new discoveries in nature, which are ever better understood when viewed in connection with the high truths of religion, must be looked upon as the property of Christian science. The various systems of philosophic Rationalism, mutually subversive, as they are, of each other, will fall to the ground, and the vulgar Rationalism which is but an emanation of the higher, and which still prevails in

* The author here alludes to the philosophy of Schelling, which was more a material and objective Pantheism, not unlike the system of Spinoza.

† This last expression contains, I believe, an allusion to the philosophy of Hegel.—*Trans.*

some particular schools, and in many of the lower walks of German literature, will finally disappear; in proportion as German philosophy becomes inbued with the spirit of religion, and German science becomes thoroughly Christian, or Catholic. In the firm hope that this will certainly happen, I have given publicity to these first essays of a philosophy I had long in secret prepared; and of which the first part; "the Philosophy of Life," treats of consciousness, or of the inward man: the second, "this Philosophy of History," which I now have here brought to a close, considers the outward man, or the progress of states and nations through all ages of the world.

That in this progress of mankind, a divine Hand and conducting Providence are clearly discernible; that earthly and visible power has not alone co-operated in this progress, and in the opposition which has impeded it; but that the struggle has been in part carried on under divine, and against invisible might;—is a truth, I trust, which if not proved to mathematical evidence, (an evidence here neither appropriate nor applicable), has still been substantiated on firm and solid grounds. We may conclude our work, by a retrospective view of society, considered in reference to that invisible world and higher region, from which the operations of this visible world proceed, in which its great destinies have their root, and which is the ultimate and highest term of all its movements.

Christianity is the emancipation of the human race from the bondage of that inimical spirit, who denies God, and, as far as in him lies, leads all created intelligences astray. Hence the Scripture styles him, "the Prince of this world;" and so he was in fact, but in ancient history only, when among all the nations of the earth, and amid the pomp of martial glory, and the splendour of Pagan life, he had established the throne of his domination. Since this divine era in the history of man, since the commencement of his emancipation in modern times, this spirit can no longer be called the prince of this world, but the *spirit of time*; the spirit opposed to divine influence, and to the Christian religion, apparent in those who consider and estimate time and all things temporal, not by the law and feeling of eternity, but for temporal interests or from temporal motives, change, or undervalue, and forget the thoughts and faith of eternity.

In the first ages of the Christian church, this spirit of time appeared as a beguiling sectarian spirit. This spirit obtained its highest triumph in the new and false faith of a fanatic Unitarianism, utterly opposed to the religion of love, and which severed from Christianity so large a portion of the Eastern church, and whole regions of Asia. In the middle ages this spirit displayed itself, not so much in hostile sects, as in scholastic disputes, in divisions between church and state, and in the internal disorders of both. At the commencement of the new era of the world,

the spirit of time claimed as an urgent want of mankind, full freedom of faith; a claim of which the immediate consequence was only a bloody warfare, and a fatal struggle of life and death protracted beyond a century. When this struggle was terminated, or rather appeased, it was succeeded by an utter indifference for all religions, provided only their morality were good; and the spirit of time proclaimed religious *indifferentism*, as the order of the day. This apparent calm was followed by the revolutionary tempest, and now that this has passed away, the spirit of time has in our days become absolute—that is to say, it has perverted reason to party—passion, or exalted passion, to the place of reason; and this is the existing form and last metamorphosis of the old evil spirit of time.

Turning now to that Divine aid which has supported mankind in their ever-enduring struggle against their own infirmities, against all the obstacles of nature, and natural circumstances, and against the opposition of the evil spirit; I have endeavoured to shew, that in the first thousand years of Primitive History, Divine Revelation, although preserved in its native purity but in the one original source, still flowed in copious streams through the religious traditions of the other great nations of that pristine epoch; and that troubled as the current might be by the admixture of many errors, yet was it easy to trace it in the midst of this slime and pollution, to its pure and sacred source. And with such a be-

lief must commence every religious view of universal history. And it is only with this religious belief, and perception of the traces of divine revelation, we can rightly comprehend and judge this primitive epoch of history. We shall prize with deeper, more earnest, and more solid affection, the great and divine era of man's redemption and emancipation (occurring as it does in the middle-point of human history), the more accurately we discriminate between what is essentially divine and unchangeably eternal in this revelation of love, and the elements of destruction which man has opposed thereto, or intermingled therewith. And it is only in the spirit of love, the history of Christian times can be rightly understood and accurately judged. In later ages, when the spirit of discord has triumphed over love, historical hope is our only remaining clue in the labyrinth of history. It is only with sentiments of grateful admiration, of amazement, and awe, we trace in the special dispensations of providence, for the advancement of Christianity and the progress of modern society, the wonderful concurrence of events towards the single object of divine love, or the unexpected exercise of divine justice long delayed; such as I have in the proper places endeavoured to point out. With this faith in Primitive Revelation, and in the glorious consummation of Christian love, I cannot better conclude this "Philosophy of History," than with the religious hope I have more than once expressed,

and which is more particularly applicable to these times — the dawn of an approaching era:—that by the thorough religious regeneration of the state, and of science, the cause of God and Christianity may obtain a complete triumph on the earth.

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